



Sioux City Art Center Selects 2019

March 23 – June 23, 2019

SIOUX CITY ART CENTER
Selects 2019



Cloverleaf, 2019, oil on canvas on board, 68 x 42 inches
courtesy the artist

Marcus Cain
Matt Drissell
Barbara Fedeler
Benjamin Gardner
Karen Gustafson
Kristine Heykants
Andrew Kosten
Cathy Palmer

Introduction

Sioux City Art Center Selects is a regional juried exhibition, open to all artists in Iowa, as well as artists living within 300 miles of Sioux City. Artists were asked to submit a body of work for review. From 123 entries, the Art Center's director and curator selected eight artists, based on the quality and consistency of the artworks and on how well the artworks reflected the artist's stated ideas. The curator then visited and worked with each artist to bring a cohesive group of artworks for this exhibition.

The exhibition presents visitors with a glimpse into how some artists in our region are thinking right now. What are some of the things they are thinking about? Among many other subjects and ideas that lie under these artworks you will find:

- a grandmother's quilts and textiles from throughout the world
- the noise produced when a car drives over a black walnut
- the natural beauty of the northeastern edge of Iowa
- the discoveries made when a painting is partially concealed by an entirely new painting
- a 1,500-year-old book on edible plants
- a father's hometown in Iowa
- the use of humor to highlight absurdities
- the power of color

The artists have used materials as diverse as their ideas: paintings made from acrylic, oil, and latex paint; drawings using willow charcoal, walnut oil, and thread; prints using intaglio methods, including etching, aquatint, and lithography; photography; and untold numbers of black walnuts. The methods for creating these works range from careful and complete pre-planning of the composition to working one step at a time with no fixed outcome until the artist knows that the artwork is finished.

Together these eight artists exemplify the great variety of stories, interests, and perspectives of residents in the upper Midwest. We are grateful to them for sharing these artworks with our visitors and community.

Sioux City Art Center Selects 2019 is supported, in part, by a grant from the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Ritual, 2018, acrylic and latex on canvas, 84 x 60 inches
courtesy the artist and Sherry Leedy Contemporary Art,
Kansas City, Missouri



Fly or Fall, 2018, acrylic and latex on canvas, 48 x 36 inches
courtesy the artist and Sherry Leedy Contemporary Art,
Kansas City, Missouri

Marcus Cain

Kansas City, MO

Marcus Cain of Kansas City, Missouri creates paintings that are visually intense. Each mark of color he applies to the canvas seems to vibrate in response to the other marks around it. Paintings like *Ritual*, measuring 84 x 60 inches, are big enough to grab your attention from across any room and so densely packed with layers of color that, if you stand close, your eyes will feel like they're dancing. And this is the impact he is working for. While the outcome of his paintings feels very much of our "hyperactive world," the origin of his fascination with patterns created by individual marks comes from the hand-sewn quilts of his grandmother.

Marcus Cain received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Kansas City Art Institute. He works as Manager of Operations and Communication, H&R Block Artspace at KCAI in Kansas City.

[Marcus's statement about his work:](#)

For me, painting is an act of slow resistance to a hyperactive world. I construct images for that narrow delay between sight and perception – a territory between looking and seeing –

where color and texture are in the service of gestures that alternately serve as subject and verb.

I employ humble organizing lines to weave color, divide space, and suggest densities of shadow, light, movement, weight, gravity, atmosphere, and other aspects of our natural world. Incremental marks are applied individually by dipping pieces of wood into pigment and stamping surfaces in repeated gestures to imply brush strokes. Through this gesture, I appeal to the eye's saccadic movements to detect and read patterns by creating disruptions or breaks within accumulated marks that may not easily reconcile as form.

My paintings represent a visual conversation between fragmentation, compression, and alignment within a shallow illusionistic space. My intent is to un-focus the viewer's eye and keep it in a constant mode of vibration — to induce a semi-meditative state and the synesthetic experience of a feeling gaze upon tactile paintings. Within these alignments exists a quotidian narrative based on biological perception, language, memory, and the presence and absence of the figure and its attendant identities.



410 & 440 East First Street, 2017, crushed walnuts and walnut ink on Arches watercolor paper, 30 x 22.25 inches
courtesy the artist



460 East First Street, 2017, crushed walnuts and walnut ink on Arches watercolor paper, 30 x 22.25 inches
courtesy the artist

Matt Drissell

Sioux Center, IA

Matt Drissell of Sioux Center, Iowa is so curious about the industry and environment of Siouland since his move in here in 2010 that he is unsatisfied simply making work about those things. He wants to make his work OF those things. Several years ago, he completed a series of colorful artworks that used melted Blue Bunny treats as his medium. The subject of his most recent series came from the walnut trees along his street in Sioux Center.

Matt Drissell is an Assistant Professor of Art at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa. He received his Master of Fine Arts degree in Painting from New York Academy of Art and his Bachelor of Arts degree from Wheaton College (Illinois).

Matt's statement about his work:

Next door to my home, there is a collection of large black walnut trees. Late summer and throughout the fall, loud gunshot sounding pops ring out as cars run over the walnuts

that have fallen onto the road. My work is inspired by these incidents as I use a minivan to crush walnuts onto paper, a process that recreates the pressure of a printmaking press. The walnuts leave embossed stains on the paper, small explosions of ink that create an intense aesthetic artifact.

These stains are then juxtaposed with walnut ink drawings of houses and vehicles from my block. I live in a quiet and conservative corner of the Midwest, in northwest Iowa, but recent political events bring to light underlying tensions and disagreements. These crushed walnut street scenes are part of a series I have titled *Domestic Disturbance* that suggest that there lies more beyond the idyllic.



*Effigy Mounds—May, 2018, willow charcoal on panel on Coventry Rag paper, 17 x 48 inches
courtesy the artist*



*Effigy Mounds—February, 2018, willow charcoal on panel on Coventry Rag paper, 17 x 48 inches
courtesy the artist and Olson-Larsen Galleries*

Barbara Fedeler

Waverly, IA

Barbara Fedeler is a native of northeastern Iowa. Her recent series of drawings uses Effigy Mounds National Monument as her subject. She has revisited Effigy Mounds throughout the year, using willow charcoal to create the delicate lines and shading that trace seasonal changes. Barbara's drawings are quite large, measuring four feet wide. The scale is important, since it gives viewers the closest approximation to the vistas from the hills.

Barbara Fedeler is a native of northeastern Iowa and is a professor of art at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Arizona and her Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from Drake University.

[Barbara's statement about her work:](#)

Drawing is my way of seeing the world. A three-dimensional reality is transcribed onto a two-dimensional surface using time-honored techniques in modern ways. The drawings use willow charcoal on rag paper, and the black, white, and gray drawings celebrate the diversity of life present in the environment. I am intrigued with the transience of light, the life in form, and the simultaneity of flatness and volume.

The drawings present an idealized view of the Iowa land. Majestic views with sweeping extensions are enhanced through perspectival distortions and compositional arrangements. Evidence of human control on the land is limited or eliminated. The panoramic format belies the interrupted nature of the actual vista.

Effigy Mounds National Monument honors the sacred past of native Iowans and presents breathtaking views of the Mississippi River. Recent works explore nature's cycles through water, land, and air.

My primary sources are in the world of natural observations. The landscape of northeastern Iowa, familiar since childhood, changes seasonally and with shifts in land use. Using nature as a source for drawings, I intend to connect the viewer with environmental issues, the power of the natural world physically and spiritually, and our human origin in nature.



The Mushrooms, 2018, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 48 inches
courtesy the artist



The Cabin, 2018, acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 inches
courtesy the artist

Benjamin Gardner

Des Moines, IA

Benjamin Gardner of Des Moines, Iowa has worked throughout his painting career to explore his sense of being and the wider idea of culture throughout different times and places. Because he appreciates the complexities of these things, his paintings usually present a feeling of multiple spaces as a way to present both physical and psychological states of existence. His current work is a step beyond even that: Ben has taken older (yet still fairly recent) paintings and then partially covered them with new layers of paint to create new landscapes.

Benjamin Gardner is Associate Professor in the Department of Art & Design at Drake University in Des Moines. He received his Master of Fine Arts degree from Illinois State University, Normal and his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois.

Ben's statement about his work:

Painting has been my main method and material of expressing ideas of being (ontology) and culture. I favor

complex compositions that contain multiple spaces as a form of abstraction, creating images that I believe are closer to a reality of visual and psychological phenomena.

Recently I have painted on old paintings to make images of landscapes that refer to anomalies, the supernatural, and alternate realities. Layers of paint on these old works reference historical change, time, and stratified space. The "window unto a world" idea of painting applies to this work by postulating worlds that are unknown, uncanny, or only slightly familiar.



Rosemary, 2017, thread and organza, 14.25 x 10.5 inches
courtesy the artist



Carrot, 2017, thread and organza, 14.25 x 11 inches
courtesy the artist

Karen Gustafson

Minneapolis, MN

Minneapolis artist Karen Gustafson has a deep interest in the food that we eat and how it has changed over time. This has led to a number of fascinating series of artworks, including her current one titled *Vienna Dioscorides*. This series is based on illustrations of edible plants from a 6th-century Byzantine illuminated manuscript. She was inspired to recreate the illustrations, but chose a surprising method to do so: embroidery. Karen uses thread and translucent organza to create what she refers to as “free-motion embroidered drawings.” Installed just away from the wall, these small and incredibly delicate artworks project an amazing power.

Karen Gustafson is an Instructor in the Art Department at Normandale Community College in Bloomington, Minnesota. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and her Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

[Karen's statement about her work:](#)

The *Vienna Dioscorides* series explores my interest in plants, their relationship to our health, and the importance of growing and consuming diverse crops and plants. My intricate drawings reflect on the complexities found in the natural world and the essential qualities each plant contributes to the whole, echoing the importance of diversity in maintaining, not only individual health, but healthy ecosystems.

Research into the historical role of plants' medicinal and nutritional properties, brought me to the fountainhead of herbals; the Greek pharmacopoeia written by Dioscorides in c. 65 AD. Dioscorides' text was considered the authority on medicinal plants for over 1500 years. The *Vienna Dioscorides* (512 AD) contains the oldest surviving complete manuscript of Dioscorides' pharmacopoeia.

Several of the nearly 400 plant paintings depicted in the *Vienna Dioscorides* are still known to us today. These plants create a connection to this ancient text, linking past to present. These paintings are the inspiration for my free-motion embroidered drawings. Stitched on translucent organza, and floated away from the wall, the drawings create a secondary cast shadow drawing.

I seek to commemorate and provide a contemporary perspective on the *Vienna Dioscorides* while contemplating the benefits and richness found within diverse communities.



Jalyne and Lynne (scholars in sustainable agriculture), 2016, archival pigment print, 20 x 16 inches
courtesy the artist



Eldoris (Lutheran church organist for 50 years), 2018, archival pigment print, 20 x 16 inches
courtesy the artist

Kristine Heykants

Minneapolis, MN

Kristine Heykants has called Minneapolis home for many years. But the small town of Belmond, IA has, through her father, been a part of her entire life. With the passage of time, both she and the town have changed. To bridge the gap in familiarity with one another, Kristine revisits the town with her camera and gets to know the residents of the community as she talks with them about posing for her. The people in these portraits, presenting themselves in a straightforward, matter-of-fact manner, allowing viewers to create their own stories for what they see.

Kristine Heykants is an adjunct faculty member at Minneapolis Community and Technical College. She received her Master of Arts degree in Journalism and Mass Communications from the University of Iowa and her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Iowa State University.

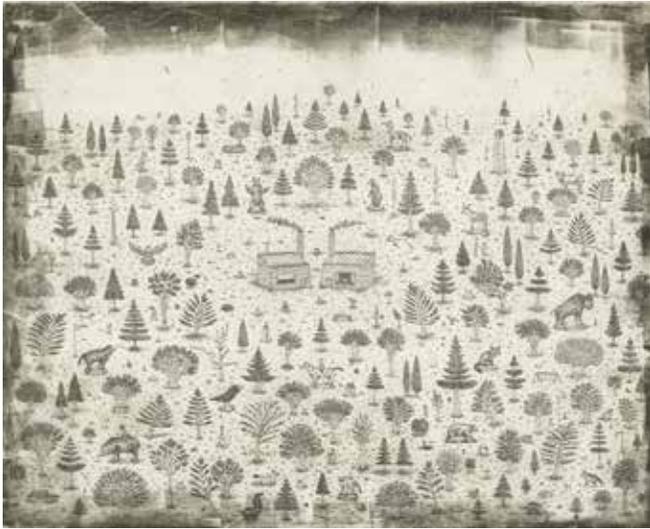
Kristine's statement about her work:

Part memoir, part typology: *Uprooted* is an ongoing quest to uncover meaning in Belmond, Iowa, population 2300. Set against the backdrop of fertile land and industrial agriculture, I am creating a description of 21st-century life in a small Midwestern town.

Although I never lived in Belmond, my father grew up there and I visited often as a child. Now 25 years later, I am creating a visual description of the people and place, filtered through my experiences of the past.

Swiss psychologist Carl Jung conceived the idea of archetypes: symbols and behaviors that have existed throughout time, in the unconscious mind of us all. Informed by this concept, I am making portraits of all classes and professions of people in and around Belmond, as a way of connecting what has gone before to what exists today. I am likewise inspired by photographer August Sander, who desired to describe the collective whole of German society.

I aim to create insight surrounding the challenges of positive human connection, particularly at a time when the economic perspective of city dwellers is at odds with those living in the country, while shedding light on the paradoxes, complexities, and social realities of rural Midwestern life.



Arboretum, 2018, intaglio print, 20 x 24 inches
courtesy the artist



Summer Camp, 2014, intaglio print, 16 x 20 inches
courtesy the artist

Andrew Kosten

Brookings, SD

Andrew Kosten of Brookings, South Dakota follows a long tradition of creating prints that feature playful images as a way of drawing added attention to some of the more absurd and serious aspects of contemporary life. As he recognizes, Andrew has “an inclination towards satire.” Like all great satirists, he balances a healthy dose of skepticism with humor in order to maintain a sense of balance. But the imagery and muted tones he uses also give his prints a sense of nostalgia, sometimes looking back at the past, and sometimes perhaps looking back from the future.

Andrew Kosten taught at the university level from 2005 through 2013. Since then, he has operated Gum Pal Press out of his home workshop. He received his Master of Fine Arts degree at the University of South Dakota and his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Washington University, St. Louis.

[Andrew's statement about his work:](#)

Through the use of physical metaphor and implied narrative it is my intention to shed light on the frequent and mundane

oddities of an all too often complacent public consciousness. Themes that have remained consistent in my work include the influence of the corrupt over the unsuspecting, the hilarity and whimsical nature of the human psyche, environmental catastrophe and the function of the individual in relation to their culture or surroundings. Frequently, I attempt to translate these themes or particular narratives with a perceivably naive or childlike use of allegorical symbolism in order to establish certain contradictions in subject that may lead the viewer to question the imagery even further. I choose printmaking due to its tactile nature and the accessibility of the multiple. The historical implications of printmaking and an interest in history in a broader sense often inform my work.



Sunspot, 2018, oil on canvas on board, 48 x 32 inches
courtesy the artist

Cathy Palmer

Sioux City, IA

Cathy Palmer of Sioux City, Iowa is now more than two decades into her “second career.” For most of that time, she has used oil paint to search for color combinations that “capture the vibrant feeling of nature and its innate spirituality.” Until recently, she arrived at that feeling by adding and subtracting many layers of paint, so that the process of painting was just as important as the paint that remained on the surface when Cathy decided the artwork was completed. She has adjusted her process in the last few years, resulting in paintings that have a lighter and more spontaneous feeling. But her goal remains the same: connecting her use of color to our experiences that cannot be expressed by words.

Cathy Palmer received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of South Dakota.

[Cathy's statement about her work:](#)

Why do I paint rather than employ other mediums?

After I had worked as a pediatric nurse, married, and became a parent, I had the opportunity to return to university and study art. For me, painting pushed all the buttons. Upon graduation, painting, drawing and the exploration with various media offer a creative freedom I have not found in other

endeavors while at the same time providing an endless journey toward an unknown destination – a true reflection of life. Most of what we need to accomplish each day calls for us to be precise with few to no mistakes. The way I need to paint opens a pathway of freedom and discovery. There is a myriad of decisions, but no exacting specifics.

When I start a painting now, I apply a mark or color to the canvas with physicality and energy. Gesture or movement provides the emotion to the canvas. Gesture is life, vitality, personality, and character. If the initial notes ring true, each subsequent mark or color adds truth and resonance. I really have to look and let the painting tell me what to do. I am also pursuing a more immediate process in the way I now paint. I am trying to hold onto each mark...waiting and looking before acting – trying to make sure it adds and doesn't detract to the overall cohesion.

Colors are formed by decisions, but they are not givens. They are found intuitively through the process of comparing them as they are applied. Painting is a language that operates on relationships. This process takes a lot of looking and listening to the painting; looking holistically at a painting and not rushing to add another mark or color.

The asymmetry that is inherent in the way I paint helps reflect the beauty of non-perfection. It mirrors the way we all have to navigate life. Life is mystery, most of which is hard to understand. Struggle provides growth and with growth comes a certain degree of harmony, which constantly needs to be challenged in a positive manner.

It's important to me to not be overly concerned with results. I learn and am striving within the process. My goal is to try to create a beautiful painting that the viewer can enter into over and over and still find life and resolution on the picture plane. Ultimately, I'm trying to grasp the sheer potential of paint and color to be transcendent.



Marcus Cain



Karen Gustafson



Matt Drissell



Kristine Heykants



Barbara Fedeler



Andrew Kosten



Benjamin Gardner



Cathy Palmer

cover
Andrew Kosten, *The Hideout*, 2015, lithograph, 19 x 19 inches
courtesy the artist