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Then & Now (Again)

Diablo Valley College Art Gallery and the Thin Gallery presents an exhibition curated by students of Art Gallery/Museum Management Art 135 and Adjunct Faculty Heather Marx.

Then & Now (Again) is a group exhibition featuring artists dating from the 18th century to the present, who have been recording and providing a platform about societal inequalities in their artworks. Exhibiting artists include Sandow Birk, Enrique Chagoya, Honoré Daumier, Eugène Delacroix, Rodney Ewing, William Hogarth, Michele Pred, Favianna Rodriguez, John Sloan, and Travis Somerville.

Exhibition dates: November 7 - December 1, 2016
Opening reception: November 7, 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
#thenandnow



Travis Somerville, *The Desire of an Empire is the Defeat of Man*, 51.5 x 80 inches, acrylic graphite and collage on paper, 2016

In observation of the upcoming election, Art 135 students selected historical and politically charged prints from Diablo Valley College's permanent art collection. In pairing these significant artists with six contemporary California artists whose practices are informed by political engagement, *Then and Now (Again)* shines a light on a range of issues that affect our community and the world at large.

Artists like **William Hogarth** (1697-1764) offered commentary on social and political life, often publishing his works in newspapers and other easily accessible modes of communication. Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* plate 1 will be featured, and mirrored a common reality for many women in 18th century London – prostitution, imprisonment and death by venereal diseases. Oakland based artist and activists **Favianna Rodriguez** and **Michele Pred** are deeply invested in woman's rights. Through a series of graphic hand printed works on paper, Rodriguez crafts strong statements of support for the women's movement to educate and reform. She will present two large pieces: *Down with Machismo* and *Patriarchy*. Pred is well known for her performative and neon sculptures that promote freedom of choice for woman in addition to mixed media pieces that tackle issues of security and gun violence. One of three works Pred will debut is *Security Storm*, in which a cascade of confiscated bullets hang down under an umbrella. This piece questions protection and security in the United States where murder rates are increasing, as are the death-by-shootings of minority groups by the police.

Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863), a famous historical French painter and lithographer, was well known for chronicling the power struggles and great wars between nations. In *Gare Derriere!!* from 1822, Delacroix suggests the atrocities of war and represents the Chios massacre, in which the Ottoman Empire killed tens of thousands of Greeks. San Francisco artist **Enrique Chagoya** is well known for utilizing popular, secular, and religious symbols to address complex issues that address issues of race, class and colonization. Chagoya will present work from his *Ghostly Meditations* series that explores the western colonization of indigenous peoples. In this series of acrylic, pencil and India ink on etchings from 19th century books, Chagoya reclaims indigenous motifs by the people who originally created them and maps them onto the pages taken from the books of the 'colonizers'. San Francisco artist **Travis Somerville**, originally from the South, tackles the depth and effects of racism in the United States in a variety of media. Somerville will present two large scale mixed media works, one of which, *The Desire of an Empire is the Defeat of Man*, references the European and American refugee and immigration crisis. Imagery culled from an Associated Press photo of a Syrian refugee juxtaposed with Antebellum wallpaper, and a Klan hood, is a prescient reminder of the collective hate and racism throughout the world.

Some of the works presented by the artists are charged with sociopolitical expression, propaganda, satire, and protest: New York City artist **John Sloan** (1871-1951) was an American painter and printmaker who helped define New York City and chronicled the depths of the human condition. On view will be Sloan's *6th Avenue, Greenwich Village* which depicts the drab, shabby, happy & sad aspects of early 20th century New York City and its residents. Like Sloan, Los Angeles-based artist **Sadow Birk** has been chronicling the socio-economic conditions that plague America. Birk will present two ink on mylar drawings from his adapta-

tion of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, specifically from the *Purgatorio* cycle, illustrating poverty and urban blight in downtown L.A. In addition, Birk co-opts the grand landscape tradition in his picturesque landscapes of United States prisons, commenting on the economic and racial epidemic of incarceration.

Honoré Daumier (1808-1879) was a well-known political satirist in 19th C France. Daumier's lithograph, *At Mantoue*, questions the ethics and racial motivations of war, and illustrates the battle for Mantoue, Italy under attack by Austria. San Francisco based **Rodney Ewing** focuses on the need to intersect body and place, memory and fact, to re-examine human histories, cultural conditions, racism and violence in the United States. Ewing will present two gripping mixed media works on paper from his *Fact & Fiction* series. In addition, Ewing will install his large scroll, *17 Seconds of Black*, in the Thin Gallery that runs the length of the new Hospitality Services building on campus. This work reprises social media posts about the recent shootings and subsequent #BlackLivesMatter movement.

Against the backdrop of a highly charged presidential race, *Then and Now (Again)*, hopes to engage the student body at Diablo Valley College to reflect upon our collective struggles for social equality. By looking at both the past and present, the curators hope to foster a discourse on social inequalities and to help initiate change.

Location:

Diablo Valley College Art Gallery is located in the Arts building #A305

321 Golf Club Road, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Gallery Open Hours: M-TH 11AM-4PM & F 11AM-3PM

www.dvc.edu/artgallery