Hunter College
BFA Degree Show 2024

Peter Ayala
Jarrett Esaw
Sarah Lou Haddad
Natalie Hernandez
Dianna Hu
Frankie Tejada Lizardo
Mario Daniel Martinez
Alex Perloff
Maria Fernanda Rivera
Noelle Salaun
Sara Shaw

May 9th - June 8th
Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery
Hunter BFA 2024 Degree Show

Peter Ayala  
Jarrett Esaw  
Sarah Lou Haddad  
Natalie Hernandez  
Dianna Hu  
Frankie Tejada Lizardo  
Mario Daniel Martinez  
Alex Perloff  
Maria Fernanda Rivera  
Noelle Salaun  
Sara Shaw

May 9th 2024 - June 8th 2024  
Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Gallery  
132 East 68th Street, New York, NY, 10065  
Tuesday - Sunday 12-6pm
Table of Contents:

Cover by Sara Shaw

Foreword
Cameron Martin

Class Portraits
Jarrett Esaw

Peter Ayala

Jarrett Esaw

Sarah Lou Haddad

Natalie Hernandez

Dianna Hu

Frankie Tejada Lizardo

Mario Daniel Martinez

Alex Perloff

Maria Fernanda Rivera

Noelle Salaun

Sara Shaw

Acknowledgements
The thirst for information, openness to debate, and ambition to grow in the studio and as thinkers that defines the 2024 BFA class at Hunter College has been and continues to be a source of optimism for me during a moment in history when so much feels in flux. Working experimentally across photography, collage, video, painting, sculpture, quilting, ceramics, installation, sound and more, the members of this remarkable group of emerging artists are the embodiment of what it means to have come of age as thoughtful makers in the first quarter of the 21st century. Unburdened by conventions of medium, each nimbly embraces whatever form makes the most sense for the content they feel compelled to put forth, expressing great care and conviction through what they produce. The perceived boundaries between the formal, personal, conceptual and political aspects of artmaking have been largely collapsed, resulting in work that is at once deeply felt and brimming with urgency. It has been a privilege being along for the ride this past year, and to witness the myriad ways these burgeoning artists have come into their own.
Exhibitions can function like punctuation marks at the end of a sentence, indicating one kind of finality or closure. And, because an artist’s work is never done, there is always another sentence, another paragraph, another draft. The work in this show is the result of intense dedication, a hard-won reward generated out of efforts both individual and collective that represents the culmination of months of struggle and development. It is also one part of a larger trajectory for the artists, whose promise is just starting to unfold. The exhibition affords us the opportunity to see the fruits of their labor organized under one roof, and the pleasure of teasing out the histories they are engaging and the dialogues they are forming between each other, with us, and beyond. What is just as exciting is the prospect of how the work continues to expand and mature as they move out into the larger world.

The need for strong, intelligent voices who are willing to take on the issues of the day with nuance and complex approaches to problem solving is more acute than ever. Witnessing the many evolutions that have taken place within the BFA class this year has been nothing short of inspirational. Taking in the diverse, layered offerings this class presents us is heartening: if this is what the future looks like we are going to be okay.

Cameron Martin
Interim Head of the Hunter BFA
Peter Ayala
Brooklyn, New York
@peter_andrew21

VI. Grief Slows
I’ve been playing games
I’ve been playing to avoid mediation
Playing to avoid the answers clear as day
Playing and keeping myself unentertained;
unentertained, unamused, unmotivated
I’ve been playing games so as to avoid the present
The present I fell out of touch with
I’m unsure
Is it a blending? Blurring?
Growing? Coming through? Do these things resonate?
The algorithm is broken
How do I get ahead of it this time?
Is that what I’m supposed to do?
Not ride the wave?
I want to feel alive
Instead I am frustrated, unmoved, sad, broken, distraught

There are good times
Enjoyment(?)
I miss parks, walking, laughing, friends, basic tv, colors, working on self, meditation, stretching, reflection.

My plants are dying
Turning brown by the day
No catch up

VII. Grief Awakens
Am I not a beautiful woman for who you’d like to hold the door
Maybe resembling the guy who bullied you in junior high
I was bullied too
In elementary, junior high, and high school
Mostly by boys who looked like me
Sometimes by the beautiful woman
And I held the door for them anyway

VIII. Revel in Grief
But it wasn’t about the outcome
It was just about enjoying the process
It was intended a peaceful world where we enjoyed the process
Lust or greed came over us
For everything you can think of there is a possibility something can go wrong. The time you may want the outcome to not be wrong

IX. Grief Heals
It’s a daily practice

X. Grief is Love
Jarrett Esaw is a photographer based in New York City. Interested in natural light, Jarrett constantly searches for compositions and situations that stand out in different lighting. His work encompasses a variety of genres, with a focus on street photography. Printing is an integral aspect of his practice. Whether it be traditional silver gelatin, alternative processes, or inkjet his images are not fully realized until they exist physically.

“Taking pictures is savoring life intensely, every hundredth of a second.”

— Marc Riboud
Unforgettable Time, 2023
inkjet print
13 x 19 in (16 x 24 in frame)
Winter Light, 2024
alt process printing
3, 8 x 10 in
Sarah Lou Haddad

Brooklyn, New York
@fresh.laundr.y
Video/Performance/Sculpture

Sarah Lou Haddad (b. 2000) is an interdisciplinary artist born and raised in Brooklyn, New York working in video, performance, and sculpture. Haddad is a woman of Syrian Jewish descent, her practice serves as a way of understanding the specificities of her intersection. Grounding herself in research, she explores collective consciousness and the shift between personal and universal. Haddad works with her performative body as a specific object, through its image intrinsically tying her practice to her identity as a Syrian Jewish Woman. The divine feminine is a concept Haddad works through in her video work, as a way of reconciling the two patriarchal cultures of her upbringing. Minimalist forms serve as a vessel for video work in Haddad’s practice. She pokes holes literally and conceptually in minimalist forms, critiquing its machismo past. Haddad questions the gendering of hard edge, protruding forms as masculine and soft edge curvy forms representing the feminine. By placing both the feminine and the masculine on the same plane through her video sculptures, Haddad creates a new understanding of the “phallic” and who is allowed to possess or create what.

Still from “Is Eve to Blame?” 2024
MDF, wall paint, screens
6.6 x 3.3 ft
6:00 min
Clockwise from top: Installation Untitled, 2023,
Untitled, 2023, Foamboard, CRT TV, duration 10:00
לא תcrap (Don’t Come Close), 2023, Foamboard, screen, duration 5:00

In Response to Robert Morris, 2023
inkjet print mounted on mat board
Natalie Hernandez
Born in Queens, NY
Based in Brooklyn, NY
@natlarata
Video/Installation

Reality, 2023, video still
Daydream, 2023, video still
Fragile, 2024, video still
Dianna Hu
Queens, New York
@deehu_makes

Dianna’s art addresses themes of self excavation. Her process involves revisiting locations from her past and creating images from these places that capture the emotional experience of re-evaluating the conditions of one’s upbringing. The final pieces are unbound but also placeable, existing in the realm of photographic disclosure while still activating the imagination with elements of obscuring. She documents images of locations and objects from her personal history, without narrativizing a specific biography. Her work involves hanging installations of cyanotype prints made on xuan paper, a material traditionally used for Chinese painting and calligraphy. The initial images are photographs of landmarks from her childhood; places that may seem unremarkable but carry emotional resonance. She abstracts, layers, marks, and tones the images to create distorted scenes of chaotic compulsiveness to express the challenges encountered when attempting definition. In these works, the journey of self-invention as a disjointed, turbulent endeavor.
Frankie Tejada Lizardo
Moca, Dominican Republic, currently based in Queens
Multidisciplinary artist
@necrotic_stab

Frankie Tejada Lizardo is a multidisciplinary artist born in Moca, Dominican Republic and currently based in New York City. They are working in various mediums in order to create pieces that are connected to them by exploring themes of displacement, decolonization, gender expression, memories, heritage and traditions. Through the use of unconventional materials and techniques, they establish connections and critiques of institutions within the realms of politics, religion, imperialism, and patriarchy. Currently exploring Dominican folklore, like the Carnival, along with the myths and legends of the popular folk stories. With this, Frankie seeks to maintain these cultural traditions through their art.

Frankie Tejada Lizardo nació en Moca, República Dominicana y actualmente vive en Nueva York. Al trabajar en varios medios crea piezas que exploran temas de desplazamiento, descolonización, expresión de género, memorias, cultura y tradiciones. Mediante el uso de materiales y técnicas no convencionales, Frankie establece conexiones y críticas de instituciones dentro de los ámbitos de la política, la religión, el imperialismo y el patriarcado. Actualmente explorando el folklore dominicano, como el Carnaval, junto con los mitos y leyendas de los cuentos populares. Con esto, Frankie busca mantener estas tradiciones culturales a través de su arte.
Diablo Cojuelo
2023
Ceramic mask
25 x 12 in

Enmacarao
2023
Ceramic mask
40 x 20 in

El Moquitero
2024
Ceramic mask, fabric
30 x 12 in
Nudos En El Tiempo
2023
Cyanotype on paper, hair
44 x 12 in
Mario Daniel Martinez
Born and raised in Miami, he now finds his artistic roots in the diverse community of the Bronx. His art encapsulates the intricate dance between cultural heritage and urban life, navigating the liminal spaces of identity. As a first-generation Cuban-American artist, he weaves narratives of familial roots and societal intersections through the alchemy of mixed media, inviting viewers to connect with his unique perspective. Martinez’s artistic process is a fusion of the old and the new, blending traditional and contemporary techniques to create a unique visual language. He marries photographic elements with hand-drawn images on light-sensitive materials, a process that mirrors the complexity of cultural experiences. The marriage of photographic paper, chemicals, and the meticulous art of screen-printing results in a visual language that is as intriguing as it is unique, inviting viewers to delve deeper into the layers of his art. Martinez’s art is a visual memoir, inviting viewers into the nuanced spaces where ancestral, historical, cultural, and societal narratives converge. Through his lens, Martinez seeks to challenge preconceived notions, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexity of identity and the richness that emerges from embracing diverse influences. In essence, Martinez’s work explores the hybrid, celebrating the multifaceted layers of the Afro-Cuban American experience.
Landscapes, 2024
Reach, 2024
Chemigram mounted on birch panel
Kodak color paper (expired 1979)
Processed through B&W chemistry
12 x 12 in

Ile, 2024
Silver gelatin
Chemigram mounted on birch panel
Expired Kodak matte paper (1971)
16 x 20 in
Vista, 2024
Chemigram mounted on birch panel
Kodak color paper expired 1979
Processed through B&W chemistry
12 x 9 in
Alex Perloff
Brooklyn based
From Redondo Beach, CA
@alexperloff.art & @alexperloff.music
Multi-disciplinary working primarily in sound and video

Alex Perloff is an artist and musician living in Brooklyn, NY. His artistic practice captures the frenetic ephemerality of life—projecting sublime scenes through multimedia installations sourcing both archival footage and digitally manipulated photographs. Drawing from his background in music composition, atmospheric soundscapes frequently appear in his work and synthesize the temporal connections between audio and visual landscapes. He aims to portray electric primordial visions—a timelapse volcanic eruption set to a drum n’ bass beat, an abstract gesture of geometry across a page, or the soft hum of a breeze across a pool of water.
cloudscape IV from digital distortion series, 2023
digital photograph
contact sheet from Aura, 2023
cyanotype stop motion video

(right) Epoch, 2024
Acrylic vitrine, water, video projections, sound
24.5 x 32.5 x 18 in
María Fernanda Rivera

Born in San Martín, Colombia.
Raised in Colombia and Queens, NY.
@Mariafernandany
Mariafernandarivera.com
Painting/Sculpture

My work explores process as a form of storytelling, leaving application and detail to become autobiographical. The artworks are deeply rooted in panoramic cultural themes such as Colombian heritage, religion, and natural landscapes; however, they are molded by the interpersonal and personal experiences of my life.

Some of my inspirations can vary from places to artists to feelings or states of being and thinking. These works become a tangible outcome of my inner thoughts.

• Family
• Home
• Nature
• Change

• Delcy Morelos
• Seba Calfuqueo
• Charly Blackburn

• Love
• Longing
• Confusion
• Gratitude

Gloria, 2024
Acrylic on Canvas
60 x 48 in
My Garden, 2024
Acrylic on Paper, Ceramic, Twine
Holiday Trip to Cali, Colombia, 2023
Acrylic on Canvas
22 x 28 in

La Finca, 2023
Acrylic on Paper
4 1/3 x 4 1/3 in
Noelle Salaun did not grow up wild in the Dominican Republic like the stories of flowers her mother and grandmother told. Instead, she grew up within gardens and cracks in cement, nurtured by her family and friends. Salaun considers herself continually growing and ever-blossoming. She is a multimedia artist working primarily in oil paint, textile, and collage. Salaun has shown work at Shared Dialogue Shared Space (2024), Dirty Signs flux Factory (2023), Different Strokes Different Folks at The LGBT Community Center (2021). Her work can also been seen through publications such as Tilted House, The Olive Tree Review, FOKUS INSIGHT Magazine, and Bloomberg Philanthropies Connect.

Moco de Pavo, 2024
oil on wood panel
36 x 36 in
First Generation Dream, 2024
found print material, glue, gold frame
29 x 32 in
Silvestre, 2024
oil on wood panel
48 x 48 in
The tactility in sculpting and mending allows me to feed a younger version of myself and reflect on both my experience of girlhood and girlhood as a collective experience. I seek to create a new understanding of girlhood by referencing the following imagery and ideas, including but not limited to:

- ease
- embarrassment
- sadness
- bedroom
- distrust
- secret
- simplicity
- the internet
- jealousy
- desire
- time capsule
- power
- sensitivity
- pants
- shame
- food
- depletion
- collection
- american apparel
- repression
- intrusion
- care
- bathtub
- romanticization
- apology
- sentiment

My work explores collective feelings and experiences to universalize the personal. Reflecting on the peace people find in religious spaces, I aim to create solace through sculpture without one overarching power. I want to create a world for these thoughts and feelings to live, a place of comfort and contradiction, where fragility is strength. Brokenness is something I lean into. The most meaningful parts of my work are where things went “wrong”. These moments force me to consider how each decision impacts the piece and which parts are worth salvaging. Brokenness and repair, these things are never linear.
Soft Space, 2024
porcelain, glaze
20 x 11 x 7 in
Garden, 2023  
porcelain, glaze, oil pastel  
12 x 7 x 2 in

Fornace, 2023  
porcelain, glaze, thread, stones  
5 x 8 x 1 in
We would like to thank Cameron Martin, Dave McKenzie, Tim Laun and Genesis Salinas for their constant support through the BFA program and helping us put this show together.