Masters of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition 2011
Florida State University
Masters of Fine Art Candidates

Antonia Crook
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It is with great pleasure that I present the Masters of Fine Art Candidates Thesis Exhibition to the academic and regional community at Florida State University. These artists represent the great diversity and strength of our graduate program and reflect three years of intensive research, focus and hard work culminating in exciting contemporary art works.

The work they have accomplished over the past three years has been filled with in-depth discussions, long hours of physical work and consistent hard questions being asked by faculty, who consistently pushed them forward onto new terrain. These artists are poised for success, equipped with a heightened sense of critical thinking and readied for a professional life in the arts.

Congratulations to all of you, as well as the faculty who have contributed through hours of mentoring and to their peers who have helped form a strong and robust support system. In addition, I thank the many visiting artists; staff and administrators in the College of Visual Arts, Theatre and Dance who helped make this yet, another successful graduating class.

Holly Hanessian
Graduate Program Director
My installations explore the significance of the physical process of construction and contemplations of time, energy and spatial relationships. What does it mean to authentically create and interact in a world of commoditization and ever repeating imagery? How in such a world does one utilize one’s energy in conjunction with contemporary perceptions of space and time? With those questions in mind, I sculpt temporary environments with residential materials, manipulating and integrating resources into works that represent constant transformative creations of energy. Ethereal sculptures collapse, surge and gather, forming ephemeral spatial relationships for a brief period of time. Through site specificity and improvisational processes, these spaces cannot be reproduced, and therefore never commodified.

An unpredictable, imperative element of my work that affects the conceptions of physical space is the experience of the viewer. The viewer’s reaction, interaction and exploration of the art constantly alter spatial relationships. Someone who is experiencing my work is guided through the environment by the structures themselves, which simultaneously enable and impede investigation. Forms compel viewers to explore darkened or brightly lit, empty or filled spaces only to encounter more areas and indicated experiences that are ultimately unattainable.
The Intuitive Trial from Chance/Method installation, wire mesh, chair and brass wire, approx: 18’ x 13’ x 12’, 2010
My primary artistic interest is to bring historically grounded conceptual rigor to figural art in the western classical mode, integrating traditional and contemporary materials and practices, concepts and aesthetic principles in a global context.

...and Possessing Youth Eternal, plastic, oil paint, silver serving tray, cushions, blankets, ottoman, wood, steel, epoxy, 30”x 24”x 82”, 2011

The Wife Performs, oil paint on canvas, 36”x 52”, 2011

Detail
Steeped, R. Notkin Redware paperclay, Ron Propst’s flameware, mason stains, table and chair, porcelain celadon vase, silk flowers, Blackberry, teacup, paper, plastic, steal, epoxy, electric fan, arduino, ultrasonic nebulizer, 30”x 54”x 54”, 2010
I glean imagery from cinema and fashion of the 1960s, ornate Catholic rituals, hip-hop trends and the phenomenon of the ‘Super model’ of the 1990s, Italian baroque, French Rococo and the frescos of the Veneto. All of this is filtered through the high-chroma palette I associate with the merciless sun of Florida. Such color and light lend my work a playful energy. I revel in the paint, mixing blending, making hues bump up against each other. Yet, between the viewer and the figures or objects I present, is a humid space. This is the atmosphere of my dream world, a time of day, either dawn or dusk, in which one can look into another’s eyes without fear, buffered by a veil of mist, or soft, waning light.

*Pack Animal*, pastel on paper, 4’ x 4’

*Venus of the Studio*, oil on linen, 24” x 36”

*Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus*, oil on canvas, 60” x 60”
I work to integrate disparate entities. Although incongruent when directly compared, all of these subjects form informational filaments that reach out to each other, support, and intertwine, in order to create a hybrid viewpoint. Memory, for example, does not simply signify the past but now represents how we access the past through neurological retrieval, changing views, the visual representation of memory, temporal distortions, linearity, and metaphor. This view does not remain static but retains a fluidity that allows it to shift and bend like so many ripples in a pond. Pairing this theme of contrasting and connecting elements with diverse media such as interactive sculpture and digital simulations allows me to comment directly on a subject as well as the array of information held within it.
Jeff Koons Must Die!!! mixed media, 28” x 28” x 60”
The dresses I present carry the history and insignia of violence and mortality, revealing my captivation with war, civil unrest, incalculable death, and the morbid burrows of human nature. In these costumes I pretend to be exaggerated representations of historical players of the darkest assortment. I repeat my image as a black woman wearing these dresses, noting that no matter which historical, militant character I whimsically pretend to be, in reality I would always fall under as the oppressed in their world.

These characters congregate at the round table like world leaders discussing politics, economics, global policies, and the preservation of their singular interest. With so many similarities, why wouldn’t Nazism talk with chattel slavery, and suicide bombers chat it up with child soldiers? Meanwhile the viewers and civilians are the ones that must stand on the outside as these madmen with drunken ideals conspire in classified locations.
I seek to make art that fosters object centered competition and community. In my thesis I have chosen an interface design that challenges common assumptions about the isolating effects of technology. I have taken the beautiful and powerful art deco style, melded it with contemporary electronics, and turned out a series of games that encourage people to not just view art, but participate in it. This kind of social art relies on the participants for its success, not just the quality of each participant, but how well they function as a group in relation to the work.

Calm, wood, glass, electronics, 35"x 35"x 36", 2010/2011

Column, wood, glass, electronics, 18"x 18"x 36", 2010/2011
Deus Irae, wood, glass, electronics, 40"x 40"x 36", 2010/2011
This current body of work stems from my interest in how identity is formed. The series Slight is a self-reflective investigation into the materialization of memories within the domestic sphere. I construct small-scale monochromatic architectural spaces to photograph in order to present to the viewer an abstraction of a personal desire to control one’s own identity and past.
Doorway
digital inkjet print
from film
30” x 40”
2011
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