

Fresh Squeezed 4: Emerging Artists in Florida

Or, Florida: Weird, Wacky and Wonderful, would also be an apt title for this exhibition, our fourth installment of presenting emerging artists to our local community.

Of the six artists that were selected for this year's showcase, many of them use their various media to skewer our Sunshine State or at least point out its idiosyncrasies, while simultaneously highlighting its undeniable beauty and glorious strangeness.

Painter Nicholas Kalemba, documentary photographer Jared Ragland and multi-media artist Chelsea Rowe's work could be defined as a love letter to the state—two of them as life-long residents who embrace the mythology of Disney World and alligator wrestling while eyeing it all with a gentle cynicism. Jared, a recent transplant from Birmingham, sees his newly adopted community of Tarpon Springs with a critical and observant eye in his SNOWBIRD series, provoking the question of what it means to live in a place where many people are just vacationing.

Tying into the idea of transience, how does living in Florida affect artists whose cultural identity lies elsewhere? With their respective studio practices, Cindy Leung and Krystle Lemonias strive to connect their ancestry with

their current environment, raising issues of heritage and adaption and where the two intersect. Luca Molnar, like Krystle Lemonias, uses domestic women's work themes to honor unsung historical figures; in this case, pioneers of women's reproductive rights, one of whom is a native of the artist's current hometown.

The caliber of artwork being made in our state is incredible; each year of this project brings new images, fresh ideas and inspiring stories. Thank you to the many people who make this exhibition not just possible, but one of the most enjoyable and meaningful projects we do all year. Thanks to the Morean exhibition and education staff who helped narrow down 150 wonderful entries to six. Thanks to our handy preparators Betsy Orbe Lester, Tom Kaltenbaugh and Kodi Thompson whose skills make all of our exhibitions truly shine. Thanks to Beth Reynolds for the fabulous head shots of all the participating artists. Thanks to the Gobioff Foundation and Lisa and Perry Everett for providing funding and inspiring confidence in our programming. And most important, thank you to these six artists, whose important work makes us proud to call ourselves Floridians! We look forward to seeing what you will do in the future.

Amanda Cooper
Curator of Exhibitions

Please visit our website for more Fresh Squeezed events, including artist talks and workshops!

Also on view at the Morean Arts Center:

PCCA Senior Thesis Exhibitions

See works from seniors in the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School

Luna Connolly
March 14–25

Cameron Creech
March 28–April 5

Makayla Gibson
April 11–24

Upcoming Exhibitions at the Morean Arts Center:

May 9–June 24

Fadder & Sons: Paul, Jack and Peter Massing

July 11–August 27

20 x 20: Annual Members Exhibition

Quinton Merada: Sunshine City

Barry Goodman:

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Fresh SQUEEZED 4

Emerging Artists in Florida
March 10–April 27, 2020

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Nicholas Kalemba

Orlando

Nicholas Kalemba is a contemporary painter living and working in the land of cartoon mice and simulated reality, Orlando, FL. He graduated with a BFA in 2016 and an MFA in 2019 from the University of Central Florida. Specializing in acrylic and oil painting on a large scale, he works as a muralist, studio painter and adjunct professor, as well as exhibiting locally and regionally.

"My paintings immerse viewers in a familiar but skewed version of reality to expose the painfully humorous decay of our social institutions. They aim to be cryptic, humorous, macabre and seducing all at once. I'm driven by an overwhelming desire to capture and examine the moments, events and environments that define our experience as modern human beings. Often fraught with dualities and contradictions, my paintings seek to hold a mirror to the society that produced them, in order to expose some of the unseen decay within that society and within myself. They are reflections not only of myself but moreover, reflections of the painful comedy and beautiful detritus of it all."



Krystle Lemonias

Tampa

Krystle Lemonias holds a BFA from New Jersey City University and is currently pursuing an MFA in printmaking and ceramics at USF.

"I am captivated by the resilience of Caribbean people to reconstruct some sense of cultural identity. With this in mind, the accumulated experiences that have shaped my identity heavily fuels my work. My art is a reflection of who I am, a multidisciplinary hybrid; they interweave non-linear oral narratives and historical accounts that each piece unfolds when closely investigated. The work contemplates the social complexities that the intersection of gender, class, culture, immigration and heredity presents.

"In my research, I constantly converse with my father, someone who holds a wealth of oral history about my paternal lineage and Jamaican culture. I also converse with my mother and other women who have immigrated and are employed in various domestic service jobs. I piece together the information from these sources, as well as my experience with documented history. This process inspires me to critically examine my identity while expanding the recorded lived experiences of Caribbean people. Using found materials has become essential to how I contextualize my subject matter.

"By paying attention to the past and present, my work tells comprehensive untold stories in attempts to re-narrate ascribed stories in hopes for a better future."



Jared Ragland

Tarpon Springs

Jared Ragland is a fine art and documentary photographer and former White House photo editor. He is the photo editor of National Geographic Books' *The President's Photographer: Fifty Years Inside the Oval Office* and has worked on assignment for NGOs in the Balkans, the former Soviet Bloc, East Africa and Haiti. Jared's socially-conscious art practice is rooted in his lifelong exposure to the storytelling traditions of the American South, and his fine art, documentary, and film work has been exhibited internationally and recently featured by *Forbes*, *The Oxford American*, and PBS. A recent newcomer to Florida, Jared currently resides in the historic Greektown community of Tarpon Springs and teaches in the Judy Genshaft Honors College at the University of South Florida.

"SNOWBIRD is a project begun shortly after my recent move to Tarpon Springs, Florida. Consisting of photographs made during daily walks and bike rides around town alongside a collection of historical images, objects, and ephemera, the work situates the idyllic and quotidian, the strange and the sentimental, and serves as a means of orienting myself within a unique community steeped in a complex mix of culture and history, contradiction and change."



Chelsea Rowe

St. Petersburg

Chelsea Rowe is a multimedia artist working in painting, drawing, installation, sound, textile and performance. Based in St. Petersburg, Chelsea is also an educator as part of the VFX faculty at Columbia College Hollywood. She received her MFA in multidisciplinary art from the Mount Royal School of Art at MICA, as well as her BFA in Drawing from the University of Florida. She has shown work in both solo and group exhibitions in Florida, Maryland, Colorado, and Puerto Rico. She has been an artist in residence at Elsewhere Studios in Paonia, CO, and was awarded a full scholarship to attend the Vermont Studio Center in February of 2019. Chelsea is also the published author of *On Flooding Green* (2018).

"I create environments—whether that be through installation, sculpture, video, costumed performance, painting or drawing – that are the manifestation of a fantastical neo-primordial swamp inspired by my Floridian home. My work contains themes of nesting, hiding, adaptation, birth, and consumption, as well as the human body as a landscape to house non-human creatures and stories.

"Each work that I create I consider to be a living creature within an overarching narrative. Recently I have been working with the idea of hiding in plain sight—of adapting to change quickly but ostentatiously, and how quick change is such an inherently Floridian state of being, especially when it comes to hurricanes. Many of these works feature changing colored light that causes some colors to glow while others disappear."



Cindy Leung

Gainesville

Cindy Leung received her BFA in Studio Arts with a concentration in ceramics from Queens College, City University of New York. She is currently pursuing her MFA in Ceramics at the University of Florida. Most recently, she completed her studio assistantship at BrickHouse Ceramic Art Center in New York and summer teaching assistantship in Jingdezhen, China.

A Borrowed Place on Borrowed Time is a series of work consisting of mental spaces that allow the audience to be intimate with themselves. The inspiration for this series comes from my upbringing in a former British colony, Hong Kong. 'A borrowed place on borrowed time' is a phrase that is frequently used to describe the nature of the British colonial rule over Hong Kong.

"Growing up in an international financial center, my childhood was filled with both Western and Eastern cultural influences. Such influences manifest themselves through politics, education, languages, and pop culture. The images on the sculptures serve as comparisons between traditional and pop art; the colors and patterns create moments of intimacy, vulnerability, and joy."



Luca Molnar

DeLand

Luca Molnar (b. 1991, Budapest, Hungary) received her MFA from NYU and her BA in Studio Art from Dartmouth College. Her work has been most recently exhibited at the Hand Art Center, DeLand, FL; Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ; NADA House, Governor's Island, NY; Abigail Ogilvy Gallery, Boston, MA; and 80WSE Gallery, NY, NY. Molnar is an Assistant Professor of Studio Art at Stetson University in DeLand, Florida.

"I paint fractured space, pitting continents of pattern against one another as a mirror for societal structure. My recent paintings derive from maps of politically charged and historically rich places, both real and imagined. The patterns I use quote specific domestic decorative items—embroidery, quilts, clothing, wallpaper, tile, and the like. These patterns are ones we encounter in the everyday, most often in bathrooms and kitchens, the centers of care for the body and the often-invisible labor of women.

"The home has an inescapable duality as both a site of comfort and a battleground of intimate violence. As the set for our inner lives, domestic borders and power structures are contested, ever-shifting, and laden with history. To accurately confront the state of the domestic, I paint edges where disparate patterns or colors collide. My desire to confront carries into text and floor pieces that contextualize and assert a claim to space for the paintings. My paintings and installations make a case for the political nature of the decorative. In my work, I consider what insight can be gained by sentencing oppositional patterns to live in the same space. The resulting conditions of coexistence pose vital questions for me about the role of sources, the political impacts of fragmentation, and painting beyond the decorative."

