

## Fresh Squeezed 5: Emerging Artists in Florida

Here we are: year FIVE of highlighting and celebrating emerging artists in the Sunshine State. What started out as an experimental project showcasing 6 artists' work in 2017 has ballooned into an event that our community looks forward to (and we as a staff do, too). 5 years and 30 artists later, we are still going strong, as there seems to be no end to the fresh and exciting talent this state produces.

But before we get too nostalgic, let's talk about this year's stellar crop of artists. *Fresh Squeezed* is a statewide exhibition, and we cast the net via an online jurying system. This year, 130 artists applied for only five slots, making tough work for our selection panel. The panel looks for several criteria when viewing candidates for the exhibition: a unique voice, artistic skill, a cohesive body of work, and it never hurts to throw in some love for our state as well.

The artists who participated in *Fresh Squeezed 5* deal with issues both intensely personal and universal in their practices. Brigitte Coover's delightful, irresistible sculptures engage the mind and the senses and practically beg to be touched (please do so, but gently). But behind the candy colors and slick textures lies a deeper theme of dealing daily with disease, demonstrating that something can be attractive and repellent simultaneously. Zoraye Cyrus uses her large-scale paintings and drawings as a platform to bring attention to issues related to difficulties faced by People of Color, while at the same time emphasizing and celebrating what it means to be a Black woman. Jacob Z. Wan pushes the limits of his traditional bookbinding skills, creating installations that address his sexuality in a room-sized yet intimate manner.

Removing the personal and focusing more on shared experiences, Carolina Alamilla draws on her memory of childhood swimming lessons to create engaging sculptures and photographs that invite the

viewer to abandon worry and fear, and just...float. Photographer Justin Nolan, a Florida transplant, sees the oddities of our fine state, how it is not only a physical place, but also a myth, a marketable destination of Shamu-sized proportions. His works call on us to see our surroundings differently by erasing some of the context and leaving only props and backdrops.

In addition to these five artists, and to celebrate five years of *Fresh Squeezed*, we are thrilled to showcase the works of 25 "former squeezes"—artists who participated in years 1 through 4. See what they are doing now, and what they've been up to since their first exhibition here at the Morean.

On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Morean, I'd like to thank all the individuals and groups who have believed in this project from the beginning, providing encouragement, advice, and financial support. For five years we have been able to uplift emerging artists, sharing their work with our community, thanks to these people. Gratitude to our friends at the Gobioff Foundation, Smith & Associates Real Estate, Lisa and Perry Everett and Jeff and Jennifer Lovelady for enabling us to say "yes" to free shipping, out-of-town studio visits, artist stipends, an exhibition brochure, and so much more. Thanks also to Betsy Orbe Lester and Tom Kaltenbaugh, art installers extraordinaire, and Jessica Todd, whose thoughtfulness and attention to detail touched every part of this year's exhibition. And of course, thank you to the artists, both in this year's exhibition and the ones that preceded it; you all are extraordinary, and we're proud to know you and to share in a small part of your artistic journey.

**Amanda Cooper**  
Curator of Exhibitions

**morean** artscenter

### 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

**Jaden Green**  
March 26-April 14

**Arizaith Jimenez**  
April 16-May 5

**Ella Dayton-Yaeger**  
May 7-29

**ORANGE!**  
June 3-30

Works by artists from across the region in response to this sunny color.

#### Upcoming Exhibitions at the Morean Arts Center:

July 10-August 26

**LANDMARK: Members Show**  
**Chris Duncan: Pouring Color**  
**Theodosia A.G. Tamborlane: City Scapes + Cast Shadows**

#### Join Today and Support the Local Arts

Find the Package that is right for you. Membership at the Household level and above receives NARM\* benefits while supporting local programs like *Fresh Squeezed*.

\*North American Reciprocal Museum Association



Morean Arts Center • 719 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg, Florida

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Emerging Artists in Florida

April 10–June 24, 2021

**morean** artscenter



### Carolina Alamilla

#### Miami

Carolina Alamilla holds a Master of Fine Arts in Ceramics/Transmedia from Texas Tech University, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill. Born and raised in South Florida, her creative practices are driven by the concept of home, familiarities, and her ever-changing cultural identity. Using her hand building and mold-making skills, she produces multiples which lead to altered scenes of everyday life.

"We don't fit in the past; nor do we know the future. We are looking to swim freely, and safely amidst chaos and fear. *Space Swim* echoes the hope found in astronaut portraits, and sunny days by the pool. It is in searching and developing one's identity that we find ourselves in a space that is free from burdens, even if the so-called free space is in a constructed experience of a pool.

"Working through the weight of identity, I use colors and a sense of playfulness to engage with the viewer. I am stepping away from the real and creating objects that lose their functionality but are a metaphor for hope, memory and environment."



### Brigitte Coovert

#### Palm Harbor

A self-taught artist, Brigitte Coovert has lived in Florida for most of her life and currently resides in Palm Harbor. When not in her studio space, she can be found adjuncting and tutoring writing at St. Petersburg College, spending time with her fiancé, and fawning over her cat, Mr. Pants.

"My work confronts the seemingly random whims of life around us, the way we react to those events, and the lasting impact they leave on our lives. The sculptural pieces I make are largely informed by my diagnosis with an autoimmune disease in 2017, which continues to impact my life. The works deal with themes centering on loss of control and the physical manifestations of illness, as well as a juxtaposition between decay or destruction and the beauty of human resilience.

"Intensely personal yet dealing with universal themes of hope, fear, illness, and making peace with one's own imperfections, the sculptures are a reflection of me and - I hope - that others can see themselves within them as well."



### Zoraye Cyrus

#### Coconut Creek

Born in 1996 in Brooklyn, Zoraye Cyrus is a multidisciplinary studio artist who received her BFA in Drawing and Illustration at the University of Central Florida in 2019. Her work has appeared in numerous shows throughout the central Florida region and she is the recipient of the Women in the Arts 2019 Award.

"As a black woman, I am investigating my own interpretation of blackness based off of my Southern upbringing and relating personal experiences to overarching struggles within the African American and Afro Caribbean community. A therapeutic and cathartic expression of self exposes underlying systems and conceptions that reflect a common upbringing that expands beyond generations of black people.

"My work brings to light problems with colorism, incarceration, identity, and perception and as I implore my people to face these difficulties, I also encourage the celebration of black bodies, black women in spaces outside of struggle. Bringing forth our caring and supportive nature that juxtaposes our distinguished identity of self; aspects that have aided in the growth and sustaining of our community and urban culture.

"Through the use of different forms of charcoal to portray the black body, I showcase variations in which blackness can be perceived by us and 'others.' I am fascinated with the different forms of charcoal having varying degrees of darkness or 'blackness' and how the mediums bring out the richness of the pigments of pastel around it."



### Justin Nolan

#### Daytona Beach

Justin Nolan is a fine art photographer and educator currently teaching at the University of Central Florida. He received his MFA from the University of New Mexico and BA from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. In his photographs, Nolan investigates architecture and the built landscape with an interest in how the quotidian can reveal traces of human presence and invisible social foundations which undergird their creation. Much of his work focuses on commercial interiors in order to illustrate how public spaces can provoke desire, nostalgia, and fantasy. Central to the work is the way in which American identity is promoted, memorialized, and transmitted through consumer and 'themed' spaces.

Many of Nolan's interior photographs are made in malls, stores, and theme parks at times when the public is not present. These spaces, animated by human presence, now become empty stage sets with props and signage creating unexpected and vacant narratives. In his large-scale photographs, he uses the camera to isolate and reposition the often-disjointed decorative elements in these spaces. The care and precision used to create the photographs belie the way these manufactured spaces are often overlooked even while we physically inhabit them.

Since moving to Florida, Nolan has continued to document social spaces with a focus on theme parks and other tourist spaces. In contrast to the interior images in the earlier series, these Florida images convey some of the countless ways in which the image of Florida is imagined and remade in symbol and myth.



### Jacob Z. Wan

#### Melbourne

Jacob Z. Wan is a contemporary bookbinder who creates mixed-media conceptual books to celebrate the importance of oneself. He received his BFA and MFA from the University of Central Florida, and he has exhibited in Florida, Illinois, Germany, and China. Wan moved to the USA from China in 2014, and currently, he resides on the east coast of Florida.

"As a Chinese gay man, I explore sexuality, context, and introspection of personal experience through mixed media book arts. I am a contemporary bookbinder who assembles conceptual books as an expression of emotions, sequence of consciousness, and collection of moments. By experimenting with the materiality of the page, thread, and cover, I deploy personal memories to express self-awareness, celebrate solitude, and the importance of oneself."



## Fresh Squeezed 5 Opening Reception

Saturday, April 10, 5 to 8pm  
FREE and open to the public

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

## JUICY: Fresh Work by the Artists of Fresh Squeezed 1 thru 4

On View April 10-24

Featuring:

Matthew Cicanese

Chris Otten

Brian Feldman

Anh Pham

Jack Fields

Jared Ragland

J. Leigh Garcia

Marium Rana

Xat Gomez

Lance Rothstein

Barry Goodman

Chelsea Rowe

Tenee' Hart

Katrina Sarah

Nicholas Kalemba

Ericka Sobrack

Krystle Lemonias

Chad Steve

Cindy Leung

Glenyse Thompson

Penelope Livingston

Alexa Velez

Lauren Mitchell

Rebecca Zweibel

Luca Molnar