

For Immediate Release—March 1, 2011

Contact: Hannah Swartz

40 Talbot Avenue, Medford, MA 02155

hannah.swartz@tufts.edu (617) 627-3094

Tufts University Art Gallery

at the Aidekman Arts Center

40 Talbot Avenue, Medford, MA 02155

<http://artgallery.tufts.edu>

MFA THESIS EXHIBITION: April 14 - May 1, 2011
Gallery Talk with the Artists: Thursday, April 14, 5:00-6:00pm
Public Opening Reception: Thursday, April 14, 5:30-8:00pm

MEDFORD, MA – An **MFA Thesis Exhibition** of seven artists in the joint graduate degree program of Tufts University and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston opens **April 14th** at the Tufts University Art Gallery. This is the second of three MFA Thesis Exhibitions for the 2010-2011 school year.



ANI AVANIAN

The exponential growth in technological advancements has significantly altered our society, culture, and environment. We are lured into purchasing the newer, slimmer, faster gadget, which almost immediately becomes outdated. But do we stop to think where this detritus ends up after disposal? Why is that an afterthought? Avanian explores our cultural interdependence with technology, featuring large scale charcoal and pencil drawings, and an installation consisting of discarded electronic equipment.

Concurrent Influence, 2011, charcoal dust and pencil on paper, 55.5x42 inches.



JOO LEE (JULIE) KANG

By drawing mutated animals and plants, Kang questions nature's place in the modern context. What is nature? What is natural? Cross-breeding, genetic engineering, and so on; the ways in which humans can control and reconfigure the natural process become more abundant as technology advances. Should the results of such human-developed processes be construed as a part of nature, or should nature exist independently of human progress? The subjects portrayed in the drawings reflect the ambiguity of such definitions and illustrate Kang's struggle to describe what is natural in our present day.

The Collection # 43, 2008-2011, Ballpoint pen on paper, 8.5x11 inches.



ANNA O'HARA

Through conceptual processes, aggressive paint handling and choice of subject matter, O'Hara will communicate feelings of terror and the sublime. This exhibition includes paintings that reside in a place between abstraction and figuration and a live performance that will take place on the evening of the opening. In her performances, O'Hara will place herself in compromising situations, for which she will use humor, pain, absurdity and vulnerability to draw empathy from the viewer. The resulting documentation from the performance will become part of the installation and will remain throughout the duration of the exhibition.

#28, 2011, Oil on panel, 54x42 inches.



JAMES P. O'NEILL

As a veteran of the Iraq war, MFA candidate James O'Neill's current body of work *The War In Iraq, Recent Drawings* confronts his experiences as a soldier. Consisting of three large scale charcoal drawings, this work exposes the grim reality of soldiers in combat.

Iraq Soldier, Charcoal on Paper, 80x90 inches. (Photo credit: Laura Fischman)



JAMAAL B. SHEATS

A point of entry is often defined by the space it inhabits. In Sheats' three-part installation of large-scale structures with pushed, pulled, and hammered repousse' metal doors, he reverses this concept. Each door poses its own question. Sheats translates parables of contemplation, spirituality and perplexity as metaphors of human experiences into real and tangible physical space. In this instance, the point of entry defines the space.

Point of Entry (Detail) Door One, 2011, Aluminum, 84x60 inches.



CHELSEY TYLER WOOD

Wood will be exhibiting four paintings that question and personalize her relationship to the history of the female nude. Working from photography, she depicts herself and others navigating the interior space of a small wooden crate. The staged narrative, translated into paint, examines and emphasizes the physicality and psychology of her body as it exists in space and relates to others. The body is limiting and enabling. One can study it, but it will never be fully understood.

Small Spaces 1, 2011, oil on canvas, 72x52 inches.



BIYING ZHANG

As an international graduate student living in the United States, Zhang feels a strong sense of being a foreign person in this country, particularly in relationship to the current global economic crisis. In her artwork, Zhang explores the difference and displacement that foreign people feel in the US and expresses the complex position she feels as a Chinese international student and a Chinese artist, while endlessly adopting western systems of philosophy and art history. This project is intended to represent the transformation of Zhang's experience of space, while dealing with complex issues of identity, spiritualism, vulnerability, transgression, and horror.

2 and a half years, 2011, oil on canvas, 36x36 inches.

###