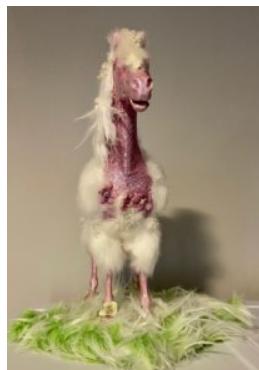


Duo:
Kelly Boehmer and Mark McLeod
January 15–February 17, 2022

GALLERY GUIDE

ATHICA's Winter 2022 exhibition *DUO* features the work of Kelly Boehmer and Mark McLeod, two artists who were selected through ATHICA's *Solo Duo Trio* open call for entries, which expands opportunities for individual artists to exhibit their work at ATHICA and its satellite location, ATHICA@Ciné. Juried by the ATHICA Exhibitions Committee with additional curation by Exhibition Committee Chair and ATHICA Board President Jon Vogt, this colorful and sculptural exhibition brings together the work of two artists from Savannah, Georgia and Murfreesboro, Tennessee. According to Vogt, "Both artists use color and dimension to achieve very different but equally engaging effects. We think their work is inexplicably complementary and we love the way that the exhibition fills ATHICA with brightness and substance."



Kelly Boehmer: *Pony* (2021) | Found object, lace, beads, synthetic flowers, enamel paint, faux and real fur



Mark McLeod: *Sons, sons* (2019) | Medium-density fiberboard (MDF), Paint

Savannah-based artist Boehmer's soft sculptures display a tragic sense of humor, finding absurd beauty in anxieties. The teeth from upcycled taxidermy and gory visceral imagery are symbolic of emotional vulnerability. Glittery sheer fabrics and saturated faux fur "soften the blow," making fears easier to confront. According to Boehmer, "Iconic works from art history, such as the *Unicorn Tapestries*, *Laocoön Group*, *Lion Hunt of Ashurbanipal*, *The Arnolfini Portrait*, among others, often serve as a starting point for my work. An expressive mark-making is formed from my sewing aggressively by hand. After an exhibition, I reuse my materials by cutting up my old sculptures to make new work, creating a layered history in the materials, similar to pentimenti, the Italian word for "repentance," which references the subtle evidence of corrections in a painting."

Murfreesboro-based artist McLeod explores current research in false and social memory, phenomenology, and imagination inflation. These interests and his search for his own personal histories inspires to create works of art that rely heavily on manipulation and recreation. His layered wood pieces are first carefully digitally constructed. He then uses CNC technology (computer control of machining tools, such as drills, lathes, mills and 3D printers) to create layered and sanded personal objects on large sheets of wood, imagery that exists in bits and pieces as part of these disjointed narratives are used to expand or create completely new memories. McLeod states, "Whether it is the recreation of a past event, the formation of an entirely new, or an augmentation of our current reality, the divide between what's remembered, what's presented and what's real are indistinguishably and irrevocably blurred."



Kelly Boehmer Artist's Statement

My soft sculptures display a tragic sense of humor, finding absurd beauty in anxieties. The teeth from upcycled taxidermy and gory visceral imagery are symbolic of emotional vulnerability. Glittery sheer fabrics and saturated faux fur "soften the blow," making fears easier to confront.

Iconic works from art history, such as the Unicorn Tapestries, Laocoön Group, Lion Hunt of Ashurbanipal, The Arnolfini Portrait, among others, often serve as a starting point for my work. An expressive mark-making is formed from my sewing aggressively by hand. After an exhibition, I reuse my materials by cutting up my old sculptures to make new work, creating a layered history in the materials, similar to pentimenti, the Italian word for “repentance,” which references the subtle evidence of corrections in a painting.

More About Kelly Boehmer

Kelly Boehmer has exhibited and performed her work nationally and internationally including shows in Baltimore, Dallas, Miami, New York City, New Orleans, Pittsburgh, San Juan, Gimpo-si, Gyeonggi-do, Korea and Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She received her BFA in Studio Art at the Maryland Institute College of Art and her MFA in Studio Art at the University of South Florida. She is a member of the performance art band, Glitter Chariot. Kelly is a Professor of Foundations Studies at Savannah College of Art and Design, in Savannah, GA. She is represented by SCAD Art Sales.

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Mark Mcleod Artist's Statement

Memory is a fallible, persistently shifting, exploitable thing. My interest in memory stems from my own inability to store and retrieve some long- and short-term events. I remember very little from my most recent experiences and even less from my childhood. This deficiency has forced me to rely on secondary storage - video has become a backup for incomplete memories while

photography has become my proof of moments. My life has been subsequently organized into small digital folders by year, month, and event. This inability to remember has caused me to question not only how I understand my past, but more importantly how I define my present.

Historical archives have generally served as a way to prove that an event did or did not happen, yet even they are subject to manipulation. Even with written, oral, or visual records, determining the authenticity of an event is difficult, if not impossible. This idea of a non-existent history, or at least a transient history, has led me to make work that questions our experiences. Every time we gather with family and talk about our childhood experiences, we change them. Every time we discuss past events with old friends, we revise those memories. Even as we look back at photos, seemingly fixed, our understanding of those events shifts. By the very act of observing, we distort our understanding of reality.

I continue to explore current research in false and social memory, phenomenology and imagination inflation. These interests and my search for my own personal histories inspire me to create works of art that rely heavily on manipulation and recreation. From layered wood pieces carefully digitally constructed and then created using CNC technology to layered and sanded personal objects on large sheets of paper, imagery that exists in bits and pieces as part of these disjointed narratives are used to expand or create completely new memories. These layers exist in parallel with the day to day noise that floods our lives. This noise fuzzes the conversations. It blurs locations. While a negative in real life, this blurred layering becomes an integral part of my work. Whether it is the recreation of a past event, the formation of an entirely new, or an augmentation of our current reality, the divide between what's remembered, what's presented and what's real are indistinguishably and irrevocably blurred.

More About Mark McLeod

Mark Mcleod is an Associate Professor of Art and Design at Middle Tennessee State University with research interests in the fallibility of memory and the use of new technology in the creation of sculptural works. Before moving to MTSU he served for 10 years as the only full time art faculty at Cleveland State Community College where he was awarded 12 grants to support both his own works of art and the self directed international artist residency "Accessibility." Having earned an MFA in Sculpture from Syracuse University, Mark's most recent work makes use of digital and CNC technologies to create layered sculptural drawings. These works explore the error prone and ever changing nature of memory and how these glitches affect the ways in which we come to understand ourselves. Mark currently lives near Nashville with his partner Audra-Kelly, two kids and two puppies.

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