

ARTSATL

MOCA GA's *Gathered IV*: sculpture, painting, photos and new media

REBECCA BRANTLEY APRIL 29, 2019



Scott Eakin's *A Clever Fiction* (2018) is acrylic paint on wood panel. It measures 40 x 40 in and won one of five jurors' prizes in MOCA GA's *Gathered IV: Georgia Artists Selecting Georgia Artists*.

MOCA GA's biennial group exhibition, *Gathered IV: Georgia Artists Selecting Georgia Artists*, features 47 works by 38 artists from more than 330 submissions. Choosing those 38 were art professor and mixed-media artist [Kevin E. Cole](#), longtime Atlanta artist [Mario Petreina](#) and multimedia artist and arts administrator [Lisa Tuttle](#).

Sculpture, painting, photography, textiles and new media such as animation are represented in the exhibition, which runs through June 15. It opens with Scott Eakin's *A Clever Fiction* (2018), an acrylic painting on wood with a gridded composition. Each rectilinear compartment shows a process of layering and scraping away, suggesting both order and chaos. It's a useful introduction to the show, whose works range from analytical and conceptual to gestural and intuitive. Eakin is one of five winners of a jurors' prize.

Other paintings veer from Eakin's architectonic order, using loose nonobjective imagery instead. Notable examples are the tall, vertical *Xenophobia (Black Paintings)*, a 2018 piece by Luke Buffenmyer, and a small, attendant work by Christina Kwan titled *Privacy* (2019). They hang together. His commanding work on wood and her acrylic ink on paper play off the other's process: controlled, precise handling of materials that merge aspects of drawing and painting.

Christopher Stevens' small photorealistic oil paintings represent a fidelity to observation otherwise absent in the paintings. The nostalgic *Luncheon* and *Pontiac* (both from 2018) show translucent, ghostly figures in mid-century environments filled with overlapping visual information — especially roadside-attraction signage and urban interiors.

Sculpture, painting, photography, textiles and new media such as animation are represented in the exhibition, which runs through June 15. It opens with Scott Eakin's *A Clever Fiction* (2018), an acrylic painting on wood with a gridded composition. Each rectilinear compartment shows a process of layering and scraping away, suggesting both order and chaos. It's a useful introduction to the show, whose works range from analytical and conceptual to gestural and intuitive. Eakin is one of five winners of a jurors' prize.

Other paintings veer from Eakin's architectonic order, using loose nonobjective imagery instead. Notable examples are the tall, vertical *Xenophobia (Black Paintings)*, a 2018 piece by Luke Buffenmyer, and a small, attendant work by Christina Kwan titled *Privacy* (2019). They hang together. His commanding work on wood and her acrylic ink on paper play off the other's process: controlled, precise handling of materials that merge aspects of drawing and painting.

Christopher Stevens' small photorealistic oil paintings represent a fidelity to observation otherwise absent in the paintings. The nostalgic *Luncheon* and *Pontiac* (both from 2018) show translucent, ghostly figures in mid-century environments filled with overlapping visual information — especially roadside-attraction signage and urban interiors.

Some sculptures suggest overt, political content. In *Armed for Purity* (from 2017's *DUEL// DUAL* series), Joseph Guay uses vintage military canteen filters in a gridded formation. The repetition of translucent gold-tinted mesh has a beauty that contradicts the violent situations in

which it can be found. Terry S. Hardy's *Sweet Dreamers* (2019) shows a chain-link fence in a small, cage-like rectangle. He puts an empty bed inside, evoking the plight of children held captive in Trump-era detention centers.

You'll see both high naturalism and gestural expression here. Philip Carpenter's exquisitely rendered *AR 15* (2018) and *Uzi* (2016) are the former. They depict weapons dead-center against a white background. Carpenter, another jurors' prize winner, draws with the authority of a scientific illustrator. By doing so, he evades clear condemnation or an embrace of weapons. A large, scrawled signature disrupts his clinical sensibility. *Domesticated Crowd* (2016) by Maggie Evans shows a similarly careful technique in its triangular accumulation of chairs against a blank space.

Eleanor Neal's provocatively titled *Am I Human* (2016) is clearly gestural expression. We see a mass of scribbled graphite lines inspired by Andre Schwarz-Bart's 1973 book *A Woman Named Solitude*. The work of historical fiction recounts the experiences of an enslaved woman from Guadeloupe. Neal, a jurors' prize winner, suggests human presence and experience through accumulated marks instead of conventional figurative practices.

In *Figment* (2018) and *Harvest Home* (2019), Mary Anne Mitchell uses the 19th-century wet-collodion process to create anachronistic images of ghostly figures outdoors. Diane Kirkland looks at contradictions in the contemporary South. Her *Unveiling of Sidney Lanier* (2016) shows a portrait bust wrapped in white, suggesting both absence and presence. Behind *Lanier* are cropped images of white men, one in a cowboy hat, another in a gray suit, thus insinuating the monument's potential disruption of the status quo.

By using an everyday kitchen as the stage for emotional drama, Patrick Di Rito's *Parisian Patina* (2019) calls to mind Canadian photographer Jeff Wall's *Insomnia*. *Parisian Patina* is part of Di Rito's *Queer Color* series, which explores colors and their emotional resonances. He uses teal here to explore queer identity.

Jerry Siegel's horizontal photographs suggest the playful relationship between costume, makeup, drag and gender identity. Each shows a figure in seven stages of transition. In *Evah Destruction* (from 2018's *REVEAL* series), the central photo shows Evah with a hirsute chest, heavily made up but still wigless and wearing nude tights beneath fishnets. Centering Evah between gender identities gives their nonbinary state visual and thematic prominence.

Careful curatorial choices in *Gathered IV* create smart associations between disparate works. Tension between generations unites Grace Kisa's mixed-media *Ancestry and Magic* (2019) and Tori Tinsley's *Forest Hug* (2016), a large acrylic painting.

Kisa repurposes material to create parts of her elegant figurative sculptures. *Ancestry and Magic* nods to her Kenyan roots and suggests lineage and ancestry — an abstracted body with a stylized interior face that suggests the presence of forebears. Tinsley's *Forest Hug* shows two humanoid creatures amid vivid colors. One figure reaches to the other, suggesting the artist's relationship to her mother, who struggles with a degenerative brain disease.

Madeleine Soloway's *Dating/Algorithms/Identity* (2018) and In Kyoung Chun's *House With Greek Salad* and *House With Green Apple* (both 2018) create a similar dialogue.

Soloway uses adjectives culled from dating apps to question the terms' viability. What does it mean to be “political,” “romantic,” “sex-driven” or “spiritual”? How useful are those words in finding a match? Chun's sculptures suggest architecture and domesticity, subtly questioning social conventions and modern customs of social relationships.

Motion and animation factor into standout works by Drew Tetz and Derek Larson.

Tetz's *Psychelangelo* is a 3D printed phenakistoscope (an 1830s animation device) that rotates on a turntable. Viewers use their smartphones to see images of the Virgin Mary's head from Michelangelo's *Pieta* (1498–99). Larson contributes three contemporary narrative animations in which cartoon characters investigate philosophical questions through dialogue that include literature and philosophy professors.