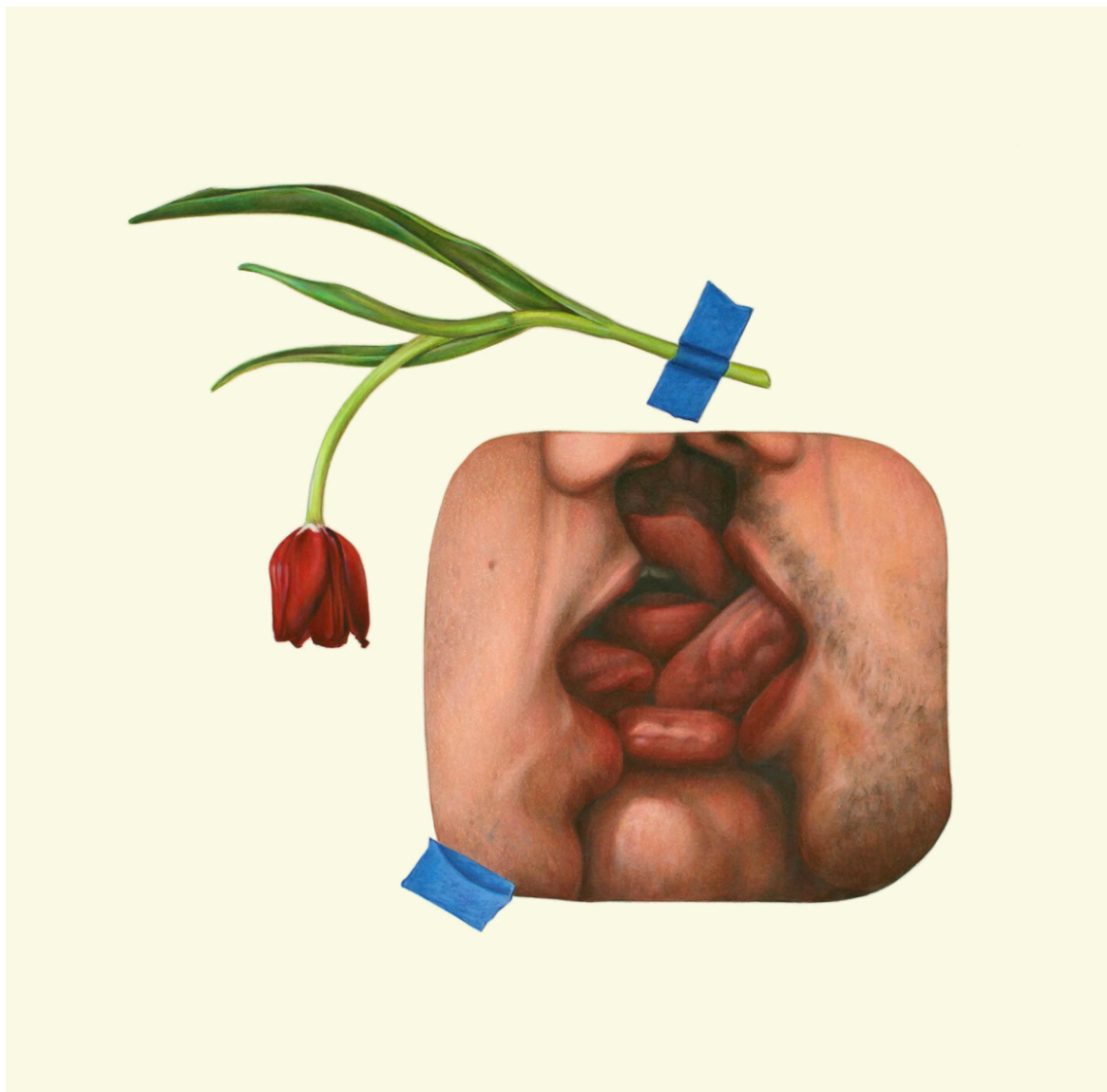




PLEASURE CRUISE

RIVALRY PROJECTS

2021



Cover: Gabriel Martinez, *Shore Leave*, 2021, Unique silver gelatin prints, 56 x 44 in., unframed (detail)

Above: Joe Sinness, *Amorous Kisses*, 2015, Colored pencil on paper, 22.5 x 22.5 in. framed

Next Page: Installation view of "Pleasure Cruise"



PLEASURE CRUISE

Rivalry Projects is thrilled to announce our final exhibit for 2021, *Pleasure Cruise*. Originating from concepts underpinning vessels, cruising, and queer liminal spaces found at sea, *Pleasure Cruise* is a group exhibition of artists working within photography, ceramics, drawing, and sculpture, whose art utilizes queerness, camp, the handmade, and humor.

Pleasure Cruise features artwork by Gabriel Martinez, Joe Sinness, Janie Stamm, and Dustin Yager. The exhibition is on view at Rivalry Projects from October 1-December 18, 2021.

From hand-built crafted ceramics dribbled with slip and layered in emoji, to S&M bedecked seashells, to meticulously penciled still-lives, and photographs that mediate space between memory and the body, *Pleasure Cruise* gives form to an ecology of queer contemporary artists and highlights the intersectionality of visibility, identity, geography, and ecology while expanding the understanding of what constitutes Queer contemporary art.

Opening *Pleasure Cruise*, Janie Stamm's *Dorothy* highlights the importance of holding space for Queer people. Stamm's work focuses on preserving Florida's environmental and Queer history in the face of climate change. She uses a craft-based practice to tell these stories. "Dorothy" blends ecology with queer bodies in absentia.

Historically, a "friend of Dorothy" was a coded way of signalling a non-heterosexual, and in this way Stamm's beach reservation "for friends of Dorothy" holds space for queer audiences from both sea and land. Constructed with glass beads, thread and fabric - echoing Dorothy's own ruby-red slippers - and additional materials sourced from the beaches of her native Florida, Stamm builds space for the queer people of yesterday, today, and tomorrow through sand and seashells built into



Above: Janie Stamm, *Dorothy*, 2019-2021, Glass beads, thread, fabric, sand and shells from Florida, o-rings, canvas, rivets, 13 x 8.5 x 2 in.

of yesterday, today, and tomorrow through sand and seashells built into breakwalls.

Anchoring walls on opposite sides of Rivalry's gallery, Joe Sinness' colored pencil on paper drawings are photo-realistic renderings of still lifes interspersed with visual detritus from contemporary queer life. Sinness creates intricate drawings and works on paper culled from detritus, flora, fauna, pornography, kitch, and material comforts. Rendered in color pencil these still lifes take on lives of their own, pointing beyond the frame of the drawing and invoking displaced histories tied to their material referents.

Sinness' *Swan Song*, for example, depicts a tableau of two male nudes *en verso*. Sourced from selfies the renderings are a reminder of exquisite posteriors for posterity, and in the style of *memento mori* are meant to invoke the passage of time, pointing back at the selfies as if to say "your beauty, too, shall pass." In this way *Swan Song* contrasts the worst body-centric impulses of the gay male community by showcasing it amid flower blossoms and birds. From Sinness' careful pencil these things will never age.

Gabriel Martinez's practice is defined by an interest in queer archives and using art making as a means to piece together lost histories and construct narrative apparatuses through ephemera, chance, failure, and materially-driven process. Of particular interest to Martinez is the summer of 1981, the last moment of nascent queer communities separate from the onslaught of HIV/AIDS.

Martinez's most recent work from the *Queer Eclipse* series incorporates the artist's aforementioned means of art making, specifically, through the use of lasers, refractions and disco ball reflections on individual silver gelatin prints created over multiple exposures. *Shore Leave* is Martinez's newest work within this exhibition and it sources the central image of a man lying face down from a queer archive. In *Shore Leave*, the figure is reproduced over contiguous silver gelatin prints at beyond scale. Mirrored, ghosted, and distorted the spectral body vibrates with loss. Martinez disturbs this reading through the distortion process, the resultant image contains arcs of light, piles of flowers and the harsh lines of decking beneath the man's prone form.



Above: Gabriel Martinez, *BITS (Bayside 5)*, 2015, Archival inkjet, silkscreen, palladium leaf on paper, 42 x 19.75 in. framed, Courtesy: Wakefield Poole



The body becomes a site of celebration within Martinez's new work, while holding space for what was lost.

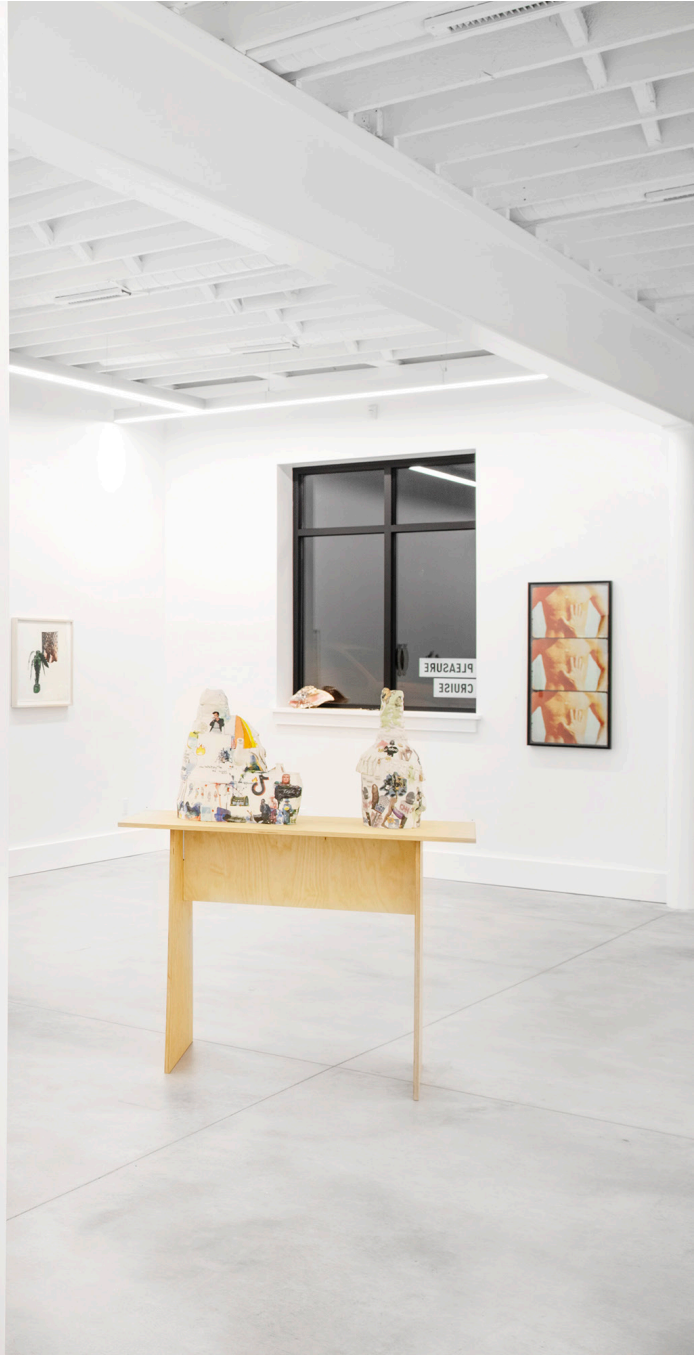
Docked on a pedestal at the gallery's center are ceramics by Dustin Yager. Similarly to Martinez, Yager is interested in the layering of visual ephemera, however, their practice seeks to suss out the absurd and the banal alike, as culled from visual and celebrity culture. Recent work includes hand-built ceramic forms whose surfaces become distribution sites of cultural imagery, memes, and inscriptions, each resulting in overloaded visual surfaces whose ultimate task is to observe and absorb while highlighting absurdities within toxic media environments and cultural conflagrations.

Predicated upon popular perceptions underpinning taste and class, Yager employs the face of thier vessels - namely *Untitled (anything goes)* - to document memes, scratches, grace notes, and formal contradictions. *Untitled (anything goes)* serves as a primer for the contents and players of visual culture in 2021, and in that way these constructions become hyper-specific memory vessels, catching the scorn, cringe, and laughter through which our society bumbles.

Untitled (anything goes) pokes fun at the absurdism of late-stage capitalism, specifically, the space race between Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson, and Elon Musk from summer 2021. In this way Yager's hybrid ship-iceberg-vessel becomes both a means of cruising, and a method for documenting pleasure cruises. Carved into the vessel's side is "whitey on the moon," referencing Gil Scott-Heron's song while dually cutting against the bombastic, self-aggrandizing importance of the space-bound billionaire class.







Artist Biographies

Gabriel Martinez (he/him) is a photo-based multidisciplinary artist and educator born and raised in Miami, Florida. He was a Pew Fellowship in the Arts recipient in 2001, received a Joan Mitchell Foundation Fellowship in 2003, and was recently awarded both a 2019 Independent Creative Production Grant from the Sachs Program for Arts Innovation and a 2019 Independence Foundation Fellowship. He has participated in several artist residency programs including: the Rosenbach Museum, the Fabric Workshop, the Fountainhead Residency, Arcadia Summer Arts Program, MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Banff Centre, the Studios at MASS MoCA and the Joan Mitchell Center.

Martinez attended the Skowhegan School of Sculpture and Painting in 2003, and received his MFA from Tyler School of Art in 1991 and his BFA from the University of Florida in 1998. He has been teaching in the Photo Program for the Department of Fine Arts, PennDesign for the last 20 years. He serves on the Advisory Board for the Center for the Emerging Visual Artist, Philadelphia Photo Arts Center and Galaei (a Queer LatinX social justice organization).

His work is included in the permanent collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Fabric Workshop & Museum and the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art.

Joe Sinness (he/him) is a visual artist who creates intricate drawings and works on paper culled from detritus, flora, fauna, pornography, kitch, and material comforts. Rendered in color pencil these still lifes take on lives of their own, pointing beyond the frame of the drawing and invoking displaced histories tied to their material referents. Specifically, Sinness sees his artwork as a chance to balance an urge for heteronormative assimilation with more authentic subversion. The work is a personal means for visualizing desire and transforming shame into dignity and pride.

Joe Sinness holds an MFA in Studio Art from the Minnesota College of Art and Design (MCAD). Sinness is also a two-time recipient of

the McKnight Visual Artist Fellowship (2019, 2016) and was the 2017 recipient of an Artist Initiative Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board and was a 2015 Artist-In-Residence with the Fire Island Artist Residency in Cherry Grove. His artwork can be found in numerous private collections, as well as the permanent collections of the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Macalester College, and the Tweed Museum of Art.

Janie Stamm (she/her) was born and raised on the edge of the Everglades in Broward County, Florida. She is a craft-based artist currently residing on the western banks of the Mississippi River in Saint Louis, Missouri. Her work focuses on preserving Florida's environmental and Queer history in the face of climate change. She uses a craft-based practice to tell these stories.

In the spring of 2019, Janie received an MFA in Visual Art from Washington University in Saint Louis. She was most recently the recipient of the 2019 John T. Milliken Foreign Travel Graduate Award, a Regional Arts Commission grant, a Critical Mass grant, a Dubinsky Scholarship to study at the Fine Arts Work Center, and the Frida Kahlo Creative Arts Award from Washington University in St. Louis. Her work was featured on the cover of the December 2016 issue of Poetry magazine and in the spring 2021 issue of CandyFloss Magazine. Janie has shown work throughout the country including Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago, and throughout the Saint Louis regional area. She was an artist in residence at ACRE in Wisconsin, the Cite Internationale des Arts in Paris, Aquarium Gallery in New Orleans, and SAFTA in Tennessee. Janie is a teaching artist-in-residence at the Contemporary Art Museum in Saint Louis.

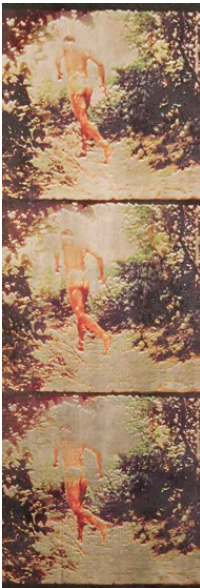
Dustin Yager (he/they) is a ceramic artist whose work deals with popular perceptions of pottery, taste, class, and all that goes along with it. Recent work includes hand-built ceramic forms whose surfaces become distribution sites of cultural imagery, memes, and inscriptions, each resulting in overloaded visual surfaces whose ultimate task is to observe and absorb while highlighting absurdities within toxic media environments and cultural conflagrations.



Gabriel Martinez,
BITS (Bayside 5), 2015,
Archival inkjet, silkscreen,
palladium leaf on paper,
42 x 19.75 in. framed,
\$4,000
Courtesy: Wakefield Poole



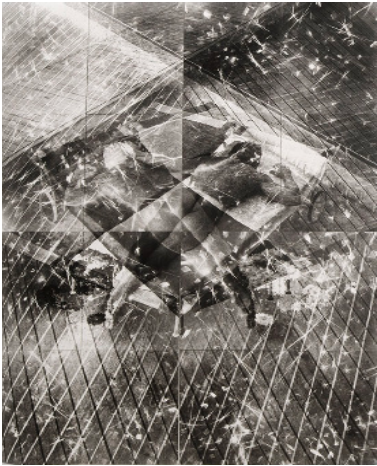
Gabriel Martinez,
BITS (Bayside 1), 2015,
Inkjet image transfer, silkscreen,
palladium leaf on paper,
16 x 21 in. framed,
\$2,000,
Courtesy: Wakefield Poole



Gabriel Martinez,
BITS (Bayside 3), 2015,
Archival inkjet, silkscreen,
palladium leaf on paper,
42 x 19.75 in. framed,
\$4,000
Courtesy: Wakefield Poole



Gabriel Martinez,
BITS (Poolside 2), 2015,
Inkjet image transfer, silkscreen,
palladium leaf on paper,
16 x 19 in. framed,
\$2,000
Courtesy: Wakefield Poole



Gabriel Martinez, *Shore Leave*, 2021,
Unique silver gelatin prints, 56 x 44 in., unframed,
\$3,500



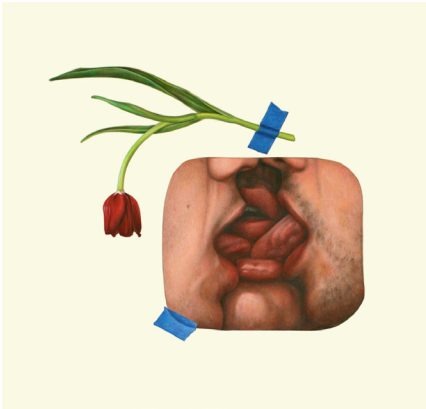
Gabriel Martinez, *Ship Wreck #2*, 2021,
Unique silver gelatin prints, 44 x 70 in. unframed,
\$4,000



Gabriel Martinez, *Belvedere*, 2015
Laser-etched found mirror, 32 in. diameter,
\$3,500



Joe Sinness, *Magic If*, 2013,
Colored pencil on paper, 24.5 x 27 in. framed,
\$2,400



Joe Sinness, *Amorous Kisses*, 2015,
Colored pencil on paper, 22.5 x 22.5 in. framed,
\$2,400



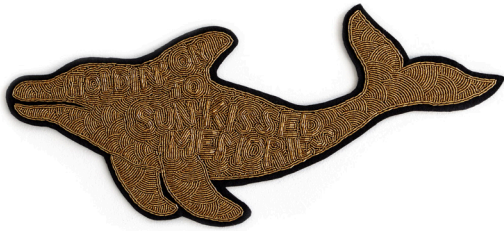
Joe Sinness, *Sweet Lamé*, 2011,
Colored pencil on paper, 29 x 23 in. framed,
\$2,400



Joe Sinness, *Swan Song*, 2011,
Colored pencil on paper, 29 x 23 in. framed,
\$2,400



Joe Sinness, *Dolly, Dolly, Dolly!*, 2012,
Colored pencil on paper, 29 x 23 in. framed,
\$2,400



Janie Stamm, *Remnants of the Golden Calf: Ocean's Dream*, 2021,
Glass beads, thread, felt,
8.25 x 18 in.,
\$1,000



Janie Stamm, *Remnants of the Golden Calf: Ocean's Kiss Goodbye*, 2021,
Glass beads, thread, felt,
13 x 8 in.,
\$1,000



Janie Stamm, *Dorothy*, 2019-2021,
Glass beads, thread, fabric, sand and shells from
Florida, o-rings, canvas, rivets,
13 x 8.5 x 2 in.,
\$800



Janie Stamm, *Relic I*, 2020,
Sponge-eaten horse conch from
Florida, thread, glass beads,
20.5 x 4 x 2.5 in.
\$650



Janie Stamm, *Depth of the Water*,
2021, Disco ball, mesh, glass beads,
thread, fringe, chain, 17 x 4.5 x 4.5 in.
\$750



Janie Stamm, *Your Pet*, 2021
Conch shell, vinyl, o-rings, rivets,
chain, leather, 12 x 12 x 8 in.
\$800



Dustin Yager, *Untitled (f*cked)*, 2016,
Porcelain with burnout, glaze, custom ceramic
decals, luster,
9.5 x 9 x 20 in.,
\$4,200



Dustin Yager, *Untitled (Anything Goes)*, 2021,
Porcelain, glaze, custom ceramic decals,
11 x 18 x 20 in.,
\$6,000



RIVALRY PROJECTS

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RIVALRY PROJECTS, or **RIVALRY**, is a commercial art gallery and arts production space located at 106 College Street in Buffalo's historic Allentown neighborhood.

Rivalry is founded on the competing motivations of artist and curator, Ryan Arthurs, to create an arts space that can function as both a site of exhibition and production of contemporary art. Rivalry exhibits emerging, mid-career and underrepresented artists working in all media, but with an emphasis toward contemporary photography.

