

The background features a dark blue field with several large, overlapping, semi-transparent grey shapes. These shapes include a large circle in the upper left, a large irregular shape in the center, and a large curved shape at the bottom. On the right side, there are geometric elements: a thick grey line forming a right-angled corner, and a horizontal grey bar below it.

SOLARIUM

SOLARIUM



Opening Reception

March 6, 2024

4 to 5:30 p.m.

Michael Hildreth

Dean of the Graduate School

Associate Provost and Vice President for Graduate Studies

Professor of Physics and Astronomy

Jason Lahr

Associate Professor, Painting and Drawing

Director of Graduate Studies

Aaron Bell

Graphic Designer

Communications Specialist

A special thank you to

Nicolina Holt


Belinda Thompson

John Lubker

*"Art is not what you see,
but what you make
others see."*

– Edgar Degas

The Graduate School is privileged to present SOLARIUM .

Under the glass skylight of Bond Hall's main room, we proudly present the work of seven talented University of Notre Dame master of fine arts MFA students, created in their studios at Riley Hall. SOLARIUM  represents a juried sampling of artistic explorations in clay, paint, plastic, and photography undertaken by students in the MFA program.

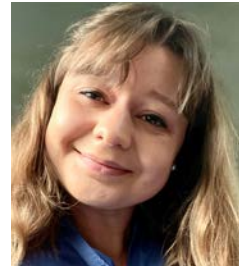
We invite you to stand before these important works and be inspired. Feel their vibrational energy. Interpret them through your own personal experiences as well as the broader context of the creative process. And enjoy our gallery space.



We Will Soon Be Rotten

Norah Amstutz—Ceramics/Pottery

We Will Soon Be Rotten critiques America's approach to the food industry, illustrating negative effects on quality of life that are consequences of prioritizing convenience and profits over the health of our nation. The strawberry is a fruit that naturally occurs once a year for a brief moment, but has been chemically altered to be available all year long. I have chosen it to represent the propaganda of accessibility that has defined the American Dream on the global stage. The images on the strawberry covered urn correspond to stories from the American food industry. We have been trained to expect access to whatever we want whenever we want it. The price we pay for this mentality arises in declining nutritional value, large companies shortchanging their employees, neglect of small farms in favor of massive operations, and environmental calamity. The strawberries change from gleaming and red to paler, browner, decomposing like the American Dream surpassing its shelf life.





bahamut (emergent)

Polypropylene, polyethylene tubing, tennis racquet string, steel, epoxy, bubble wrap, wax

Riley Fichter—Sculpture

Environment is entity; entity is environment. This group of tentacles, an iteration of my installation, *bahamut*, reflects this mimetic relationship between digested consumer materials, earthly bodies, and the environment. Transmuted through toxic craft, products of a bygone age blend into new material, new appendages, new organs, and new extensions of being. Burning, breaking, twisting, melting, swimming, crawling, tethering, molting, clawing—*bahamut*, winding its way from chthonic depths, asserting its dominion. Its emergence reflects reality—material consumption and the resulting adaptations of earthlings have long been on a path of biologic intertwining. The bodies of humans and non-humans are all changing. Now is a moment of consciousness towards material makeup and the sensitivity that lies in chemical transmutability.





Conform

Color pencil on paper

30.5" x 55.5"

December 2023

Emma Ryan—Painting

Emma was born and raised on a farm outside of Minden, Nebraska, a small rural town of about 3,000 people. Growing up, she always enjoyed creative school projects but never saw art as a career. Her perception of art began to change when she took her first drawing class as an undergrad at Doane University in Crete, Nebraska. Her passion for drawing grew, eventually leading her to earn her B.A. in studio arts with a professional emphasis in drawing, followed by her acceptance into Notre Dame's MFA program. Her current body of work is an investigation of multiple gazes through detailed drawings of the figure, devoid of setting. The background is purposefully left blank to convey an ambiguous contemplative space and to control and confine the viewer's eyes to the primary subject at hand.





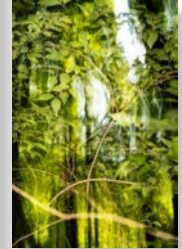
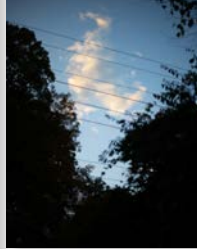
All, untitled, from
the series *A World
Apart*

Joseph Matty—Photography

In this work, I explore the ways in which the world of video games acts as a method of escape into inhabitable alternate worlds. I photograph scenes from video games using 19th century processes, such as wet plate collodion, in order to re-contextualize these digital, non-physical scenes into a physical photograph. For many of us, the digital worlds we imaginatively inhabit feel real. These photographs function to make those worlds materially tangible, which allows the viewer to feel unencumbered by disbelief.

My work is about an escape from the difficulties of life. With the photographic processes I use and the games I play, everything works in tandem as an attempt to escape to a different time, somewhere I'd rather be than here and now, but that has never really existed. To me it is a survey of these worlds, something I view as a literal extension of my own reality. Photography itself has always been about the creation of a world for me, about creating documents of a world I see through my eyes or one that I imagine.





All, untitled, from the series *The Middle Place*
Inkjet print

Thomas Callahan—Photography

Thomas Callahan is a photographer with a focus on experimental processes, memory, and the contemporary landscape. Growing up in rural California before moving to Wyoming as a teenager, Callahan uses his work to explore the areas where natural and developed spaces intersect. He is an MFA student in his 2nd year at the University of Notre Dame. Callahan earned his BFA from Montana State University. He has exhibited his photography and video works internationally.

Callahan's recent photographs presented here display the moments of thoughtless nothingness that pass us by and the periods of clarity that interrupt them. Callahan invites viewers to inspect the large fields of light and dark; to scour the planes for details that emerge from or dissolve into obscurity. Some textures are barriers to pure nothingness while others co-exist with it. In this way, the photos are reminders that everything is impermanent. The only fixture in life is change. The only state of being is transition.





Nothing's Precious
Found Object Installation



Lily Dorian—Sculpture

Lily Dorian is an interdisciplinary artist who focuses on experimentation with found objects. She is from Louisiana, and obtained a B.A. in studio art from Milsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi. Since graduating in 2020 she has exhibited nationally and internationally as well as within residency opportunities. Drawn to creative storytelling, she has worked in the film/TV industry alongside her studio practice. Now she is a MFA student in sculpture.

Through her work, she breathes rhythm and movement back into objects that had seemingly completed their journey until she intervened. She stages a finale for them, acting as the final hand in folding them into the present. In this installation she is thinking about her own personal inheritance. She has sorted box by box in an attempt to catalog and organize the collections. What she is left with are overflowing boxes, broken frames, and objects stacking on top of each other. Here, a dichotomy unfolds—between an impulse to liberate and an emotional tethering to the artifacts that lay dormant.





Burnt Out

Oil on panel
6.5" x 12"
2023

Storm before the Calm

Oil on canvas
24" x 48"
2023

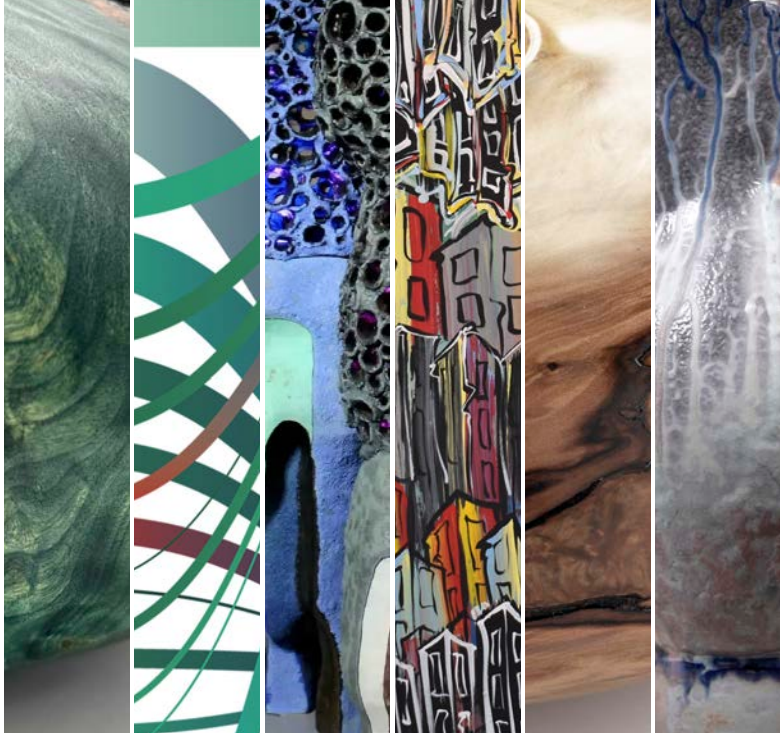
Franceska Alvarado—Painting

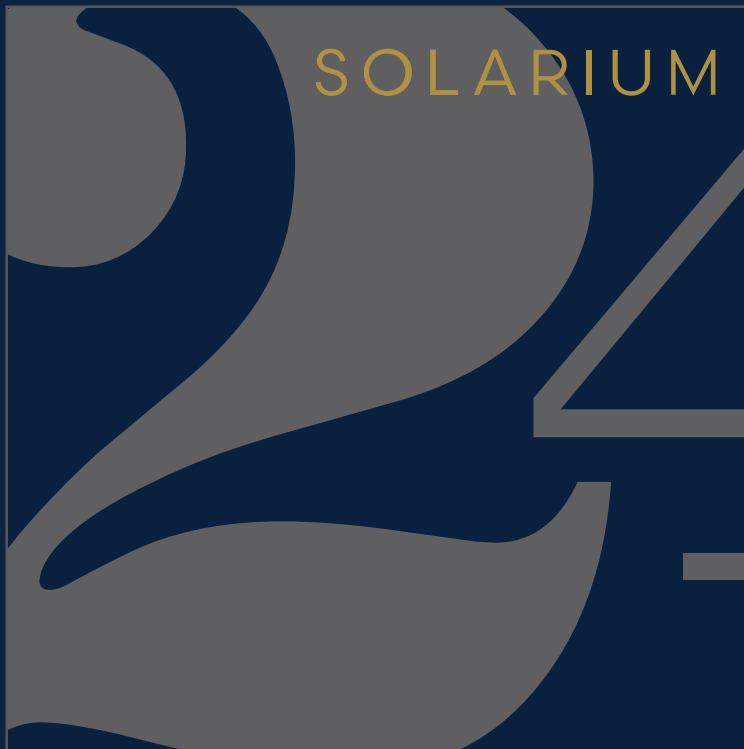
Franceska Alvarado was born and raised in Corpus Christi, Texas. Alvarado received her BFA degree from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. She is a multi-disciplinary artist who focuses primarily on painting and drawing. Her work examines the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of the human condition from the perspective of a young woman. At large, she revolves around self-portraiture, implementing heavy symbolism and unique details as a means of personifying these distinct recollections. Most recently, her work delves into intimate yet poignant moments of anxiety based on her own experiences, functioning as a personal narrative that explores the nature of paranoia through a surreal lens.



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