

The Art of  
**INFLUENCE**



Breaking Criminal Traditions

Criminal traditions are ongoing, widely practiced rituals that kill or maim millions each year yet rarely are considered crimes. These complex, centuries-old behaviors include honor killing, child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and other violence that is not only accepted but praised. The perpetrators — usually relatives — are lauded for defending their family’s reputation and doing “what’s best” for the victim. But “what’s best” causes that victim intense physical pain, great psychological damage, and often, untimely death.

In addition, new versions of criminal traditions are emerging with new demographics of victims. The perpetrators are victimized too. Ultimately, this problem will grow until we understand that human rights violations are what we do to each other in spite of our sameness, but that very sameness is our best hope of social justice.

“Thighs like stone columns, hips the circumference of earth, a navel with three folds in the middle.” Amazing, I thought, as I read a historical text describing the ideal belly dancer. I felt the same as centuries of women who had experienced the joy and power of this ancient art form. We were even built alike! A few days later, I picked up a copy of Elle magazine. There, an article described how modern Egyptian belly dancers were being jailed, assaulted, and honor killed. Killed... for dancing! I was stunned that the same dance which gave me such pleasure, which allowed for such a fierce expression of femininity, was an excuse for murdering women.

I dove into research. The onion of honor killing had complex layers—child and arranged marriage, female genital mutilation, bride burning, acid violence, stoning, circling, breast binding and these happen globally, including in the United States. With each revelation, I felt more sameness; I identified more and more with these women — and the men who didn’t want to honor kill or take a child bride. I knew I had to do something. I also knew that the question wasn’t “what,” but “who”—who did I know? Having spent my professional lifetime in the arts, I knew insanely talented, passionate artists in many genres. And I knew what to do next. I had to change my definition of success.

Instead of making a bestseller list or getting a big screenplay contract, my new definition was this—successfully using art to raise awareness as the first step toward change, toward breaking the criminal traditions. Immediately, doors opened. Out of the blue, a colleague long MIA took an office downstairs. He was on the 2013 TEDx committee at the Illinois Institute of Technology and suggested I apply to speak. A few weeks later I was standing on the TED stage. When I finished, there was silence. Not a stutter of applause. But that silence spoke volumes. It meant the audience listened and they were moved.

Coming down off the stage, I turned to a colleague and said, “We need a law school.” I explained that criminal traditions exist because, in many places, they are not against the law. That situation might change if we could use art to expose future legal influencers to these human rights issues. My colleague smiled and said, “We’ve got a law school.” Six months later, The Art of Influence: Breaking Criminal Traditions exhibit opened for the first time at IIT’s Chicago Kent College of Law to an audience of 300 ...and over six months, the number of visitors grew daily.

Since then, we have produced six major art exhibits with two scheduled for 2019, spoken to a standing room only audience at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and addressed the 105<sup>th</sup> conference of the College Art Association. All our exhibits feature extensive community and educational outreach including presentations, workshops, and seminars. In each, we strive to raise consciousness as the first step toward positive measurable change.

Cheryl Jefferson, Executive Producer  
The Art of Influence: Breaking Criminal Traditions

The Art of Influence: Breaking Criminal Traditions is an exhibition addressing a variety of human rights issues. These atrocities include acid violence, stoning and honor killing as well as the more common tragedies that we see on the evening news... human trafficking, child marriage, and the rise of Fascism. This collection of work has been brought together with the intent of beginning a dialogue about these hard-to-discuss topics.

Each object in this collection offers multiple levels of interpretation. Most of the pieces were not created specifically to represent the criminal traditions, yet they were chosen because the content alludes to the issues at hand—offering an opportunity to begin a non-threatening dialogue, create understanding and seek resolution.

As the exhibition's curator, I interpret the criminal traditions based on works of art that offer conceptual, symbolic, and metaphorical content. For example, the typical viewer might see "In the Middle" by Teresa Hofheimer, as a painterly study of a crouching male in a minimal, high-key setting. The freely painted nude is placed in the upper portion of the composition with the illusion of space only implied through subtle tonal changes of an almost white background.

But Hofheimer's image is more than just a passionate representation depicting a love for the male form. The image speaks to the psychological pain inflicted on the perpetrator of an honor killing. Honor killing is the murder of a family member by relatives who believe that the victim has shamed or violated the family's honor. The murderer is typically a young man who is expected to defend the family's pride. In the Middle is symbolic of the psychological torture imposed on the executioner. The figure's pose amplifies the impossible choice—torn and confused by the horrifying request of his family.

Honor killing may be the result of common behaviors. Outside of Western cultures, women and girls have been honor killed for wearing makeup, using technology, reading, or any reason the men of the family may choose. Gay men have been victims as well. In some Middle Eastern countries, men are thrown to their deaths from rooftops based on the presumption of being homosexual. The stark background of Hofheimer's painting may be interpreted as the intended cleansing—or at the very least—symbolic of the attempt at reestablishing purity.

By taking the legal stand of "defending the family's honor," killers typically go free. Those imprisoned are treated as heroes. The psychological effects on all involved result in a society immersed in shame and fear. But in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, can murder truly be justified by beliefs passed down from a repressive male-dominated society?

Joyce Polance addresses personal authenticity in her work. She defines it as a willingness to be vulnerable and exposed, revealing the experience of inner chaos. Her paintings express pain and suffering on a visceral level. Although not addressing a specific criminal tradition, Polance's imagery conveys the agony of repression. Her painting, titled Fault, is an image of pure emotion and inner rage. The intimate canvas presents a distraught female nude emerging from darkness. Perhaps in shock, the figure is almost

lacking facial expression. Her vacant eyes suggest that she is numb to her surroundings. She embraces her legs—tightly holding them to her chest—seeming to be contemplating her predicament. She mutely stares back at the viewer, silently screaming to exist. Desperate slashes violate the image, ripping at the pigment’s surface. This imagery seems to address the debilitating fear, imposed anguish, and brutal repression of people—of women—throughout the world.

Interpretation is somewhat expected when approaching abstract art. Both splendor and agony are found in the abstract paintings of Anne Smith Stephan. With thinly dripping paint that sometimes builds to heavy impasto, these beautiful canvases offer unique environments to explore. A calming ethereal atmosphere is created with numerous layers of pigment that conceal a deeper message. Like an archaeologist, digging and scraping, the artist seems to be excavating—uncovering elements of a not-so-distant history. The rich and compelling multi-layered surfaces can be interpreted as exposing the physical and psychological wounds of life.

The works included in this exhibition may be interpreted on many levels. Although all are beautiful at face value, this collection is intended to touch the viewer’s mind and soul by highlighting the challenges faced by our global community. The hope is that these paintings, drawings, and sculptures will inspire discussion that supports positive social change.

Chuck Gniech, Exhibition Curator

The Art of Influence: Breaking Criminal Traditions

The following information includes a statement by each exhibiting artist as well as a short bio. I've included an image of the work as reference. Larger files will be sent for display. The images are the property of each perspective artist and should not be used for purposes other than this digital exhibition without their written permission—or the written permission of the Curator, Chuck Gniech. Whenever images are presented, they must be accompanied by the name of the artist, the name of the piece, media and size.

“Factoids” connecting of the art to the Criminal Traditions is available on some of the pages. This information is shown in gray. Please remove the artist's name and title if used. It is presented only as a way to organization the information.

Carol Brookes

My Warrior Goddesses were born of a large body of mixed media wall sculptures that explore textural surfaces and the play of hard and soft forms which express both masculinity and femininity in harmony and opposition. Freed from years of being “attached to the wall” and working with abstract design forms, my goddesses have opened up a new focus and direction for my work. Taking the concepts of feminine strength and the surfaces I have been so drawn to, I have re-imagined these ideas in powerful female forms. The armored structures, woven of shiny, textured sculpting epoxy, express the protective shell we all wear to face the world. These Warrior Goddesses—with their vulnerabilities safely hidden and shielded from harm—are poised for battle. I believe in facing the world as a Warrior Goddess and that there is a Warrior standing at the ready in us all. •

Carol Brookes’ artwork has been featured in solo and group exhibitions in galleries and cultural centers throughout the United States, including SOFA Chicago; Eastern Connecticut State University; Museo Internazionale Italia Arte, Turin, Italy; Anne Lloyd Gallery–Madden Art Center, Decatur, Illinois; McLarry Modern Gallery in Santa Fe; Illinois Central College, East Peoria; the Maryland Federation of Art in Annapolis; B.J. Spoke Gallery, Huntington, New York; the University of North Iowa in Cedar Falls; the Women’s Center in Los Angeles; and the Miami Metropolitan Museum and Art Center. Her works are included in both public and private collections. Brookes received an MFA in multi-media Art from the University of Iowa. She spent four years teaching at various colleges in Florida, and six years teaching at the University of Northern Iowa. She currently works in her studio at the Bridgeport Art Center, Chicago, Illinois. •



Carol Brookes, Artemisia, sculpting epoxy and acrylic paint, 22" x 18" x 10"

## Corinna Button

My work is about being human, negotiating a world bombarded with images and projections of 'the self.' Many forms of everyday social interaction generate ideas for themes that I can build upon, "dress-up," and weave into my work. • Working with print, paint, and clay mediums, I compose figures either in groupings, as a single figure or just a face. • Everything about the way I work (both technique and subject) is motivated by the desire to reveal or "bring something to light." Thus my process in all mediums involves layering then scraping away, building then excavating; otherwise peeling back layers to "carve out" and reveal something hidden beneath the surface • It is through these painted, sculpted, or printed figures that I wish to project recognizable aspects of human experience. I want to compel and draw the viewer in for a closer look at, and beyond, the surface. •

Corinna Button completed a BA Honors degree in fine art at Leeds followed by post-graduate advanced printmaking in London. • She was elected into the Royal Society of Painters and Printmakers and has exhibited in solo and group shows internationally, presenting works in printmaking, painting, and sculpture. Her work is held in noteworthy collections including the permanent collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; The Jiangsu Art Museum, China; The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; The University of Aberystwyth, Wales; The BBC, Castle Lesley, Ireland. • She has garnered recognition with awards including The Hector Purchase Prize, The University of Aberystwyth print prize, Voices Gallery top prize for life painting, USA and Dry Red Press, London, publishing award. • Her work can also be found in many private collections worldwide. Button lives and works in London. •



Corinna Button, *Between You and Me VI*, Mixed Media, 35 x 24"      Corinna Button, *Little Black Dress*, Stoneware, 27" x 6.5" x 9"

(Corinna Button, *Between You and Me VI*) Human Trafficking - Fifty percent of the 800,000 people trafficked across international borders each year are minors. The International Labor Organization estimates that 8.4 million children are enslaved worldwide. — *International Labor Organization*



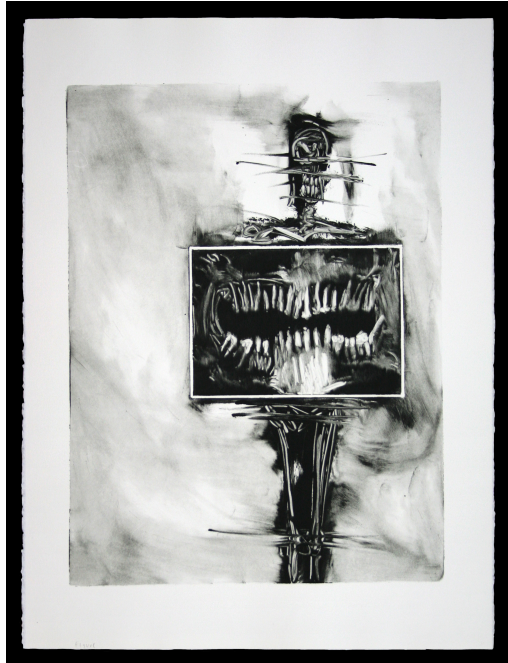
James Deeb

This work is from a series that makes up a personal and often fantastical record of the people I observe as I move through the city of Chicago. They are not traditional portraits, however, but composites of different features and expressions. It may be the lined, thin-lipped mouth of a man on a train or the heavy eyes of a woman in a coffee shop. These and other fragments are merged together as part of my process. I strive to create work that adds up to more than the sum of its parts, with these particular images emphasizing the sense of psychological confinement and isolation that I perceive in certain people. •

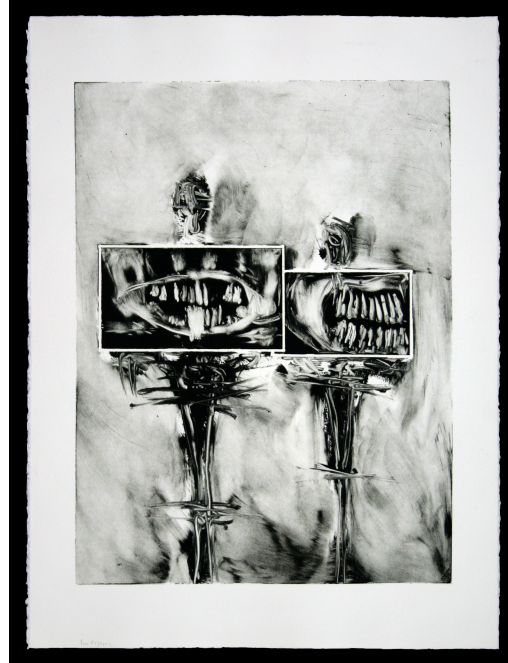
James Deeb was born behind the wall in West Berlin in 1964. He remembers drawing a lot as a child and making animated movies with lumpy clay dinosaurs. He graduated from Indiana University at South Bend in 1988, and received an MFA from Western Michigan University in 1994. Deeb's work is darkly humorous and melancholy in roughly equal measures. He refers to it as art in a minor key. •



James Deeb, Muzzle, oil on board, 17" x 11"



James Deeb, *Silent Witness*, Monotype, 21 x 15



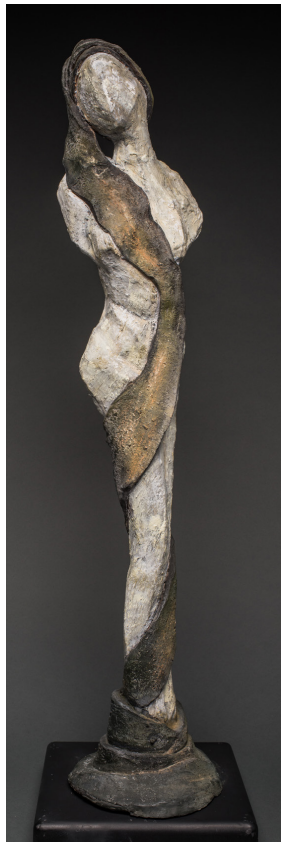
James Deeb, *Silent Witnesses*, Monotype, 21 x 15

(James Deeb, *Silent Witness*) In some cultures, when women are in public, they are required to fill her mouths with stones—or a family member inserts them for her. This keeps women from “seducing” men with the tone of their voices, or from “babbling” their opinions. In these cultures, it is the only way women are allowed to “speak” in public. Since many cultures associate women with chaos, this action holds them in check.

## Sheila Ganch

Behind the veil is a woman, ubiquitous to any patriarchal society that participates in the atrocities of war. She is the mediator, the nurturer, the peace seeker. The veils represent barriers, suppression, repression, censorship, and often an oath to secrecy. She is isolated behind the veil, her beauty, sexuality, ideas, and opinions hindered. In some societies, the veils are invisible, psychological but produce the same burdens and limitations. Plus, there is an invisible social veil of expectations. • Veiled, is a series of sculptures creating an abstract female form which is then wrapped in veils. The form beneath the veils could be a sculpture on its own. She is powerful in gesture and emotion. Veils are applied to the sculpture many times until the right form and feeling are achieved. •

Sheila Ganch received her degree from Ohio State University but considers her postgraduate training with other fine sculptors to be the reason for her success. Ganch's work has been included in exhibitions at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art, The Chicago Cultural Center, The Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago, The Harold Washington Library, and Veridian Gallery, New York. With representation in Atlanta, Philadelphia, Milwaukee and Chicago, the sculptures of Ganch can be found in many public and private collections throughout the country. •

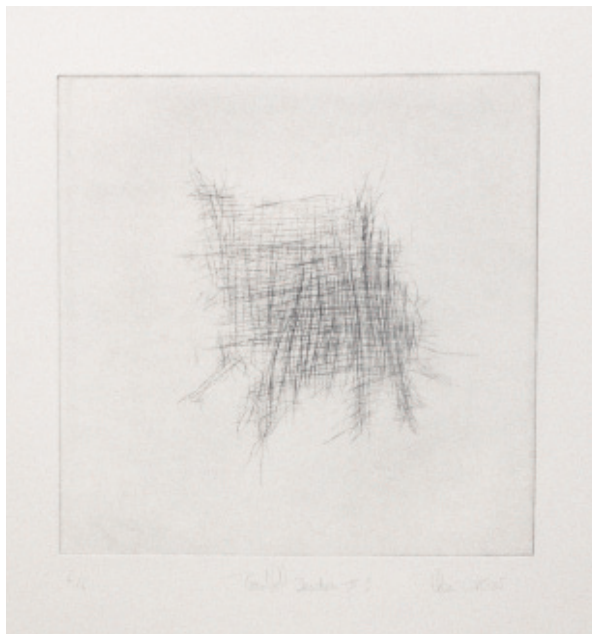


Sheila Ganch, Veiled IV [with detail], stoneware 30" x 8" x 5"

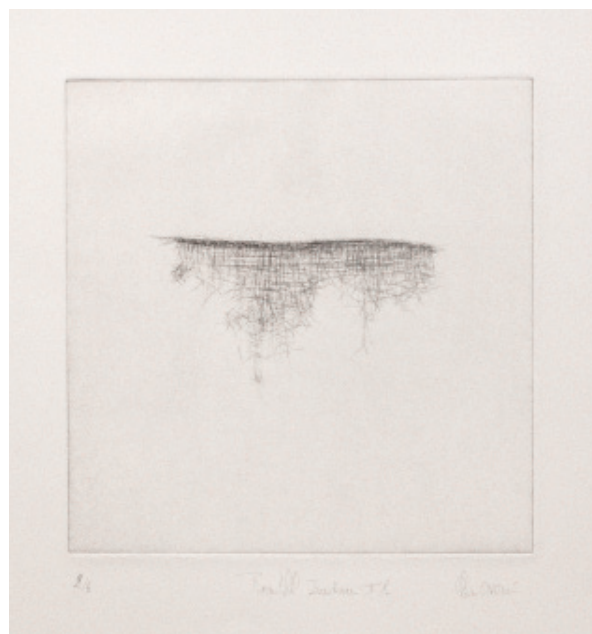
## Clair Girodie

I am fascinated by the power of silence, and how a simple mark, like a slightly longer pause or a single gesture, can reveal more than loudness. The sometimes almost unnoticeable mark works as a witness of time, tells a story, exposes a truth to those who look. Abstract or figurative, my work is then visually quiet—a layering of subtle information translating a humble story, unreadable yet familiar. • The medium and the process become important for their implied narrative. When working with thread, I carry on the long tradition of women hiding their most intimate thoughts in their loom or needlework. When working with paper, I reproduce the mechanism of time, making marks, waiting for a reaction, answering to it, covering it, transforming it, interpreting it. The original mark stays, unnoticed yet unbelievably important. When using shadows, I give my work a subtle breath. • I, above all, want to create an unexpected experience from the loud resonance of silence. •

Claire Girodie explores the unspoken, the ignored, and the power of silence. With subtle marks and layering, she forces the viewer's attention, tricking him or her with seeming pleasantness, toward a perhaps more disturbing content. • From figurative paintings to abstract drawings or installations, Girodie carefully chooses mediums for their emotional, historical and cultural values, or the implied meanings of their physical properties—reminiscent of both her youth in Europe and her strong interest in the sciences. • Her work has been extensively exhibited on the East Coast, as well as Illinois, Texas, New Mexico, and Scotland. • Girodie received her MFA in studio arts, and her BA in painting, drawing and printmaking from Towson University, graduating Summa Cum Laude. •



Beautiful Incidence #3, drypoint, 8" x 8"



Beautiful Incidence #2, drypoint, 8" x 8"

Sergio Gomez

The human form is the most important element in my work and it exists as an anonymous representation of the self. The figure dominates throughout and is depicted as a shadow, aura, ghost or energy light. I am not interested in developing the social, political, or historical characteristics of the figure. Rather, I am more interested in the human and universal appeal of the figure. • The figures exist in condensed fields of color and texture that often resemble nature forms. It is unknown whether the human figures are indoors or outdoors, perceived or remembered, standing or floating, alive or dead. In my artwork, presence overrides identity. • I am interested in the human and spiritual experience throughout the cycles of life. The human figures stand still, observe, communicate and/or listen, as they exist in their physical state. Overall, I appeal for a sense of human awareness and spiritual consciousness. •

Sergio Gomez is a Chicago-based visual artist, curator and creative entrepreneur. He received an M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University. Gomez's work has been the subject of over 40 solo exhibitions, and he has participated in over 150 group exhibitions. His work has been exhibited in Italy, Spain, Sweden, Egypt, England, Austria, Korea, Belgium, Mexico and the U.S. His work can be found in both private and public collections including the National Museum of Mexican Art, Brauer Art Museum, and the MIIT Museo Internazionale Italia Arte among others. • Besides his ample studio practice, Sergio Gomez is the founder/director of 33 Contemporary Gallery; curator/director of exhibitions at the Zhou B. Art Center; contributor for Italia Arte Magazine; art/design faculty at South Suburban College; and co-founder of the Art NXT Level program. •

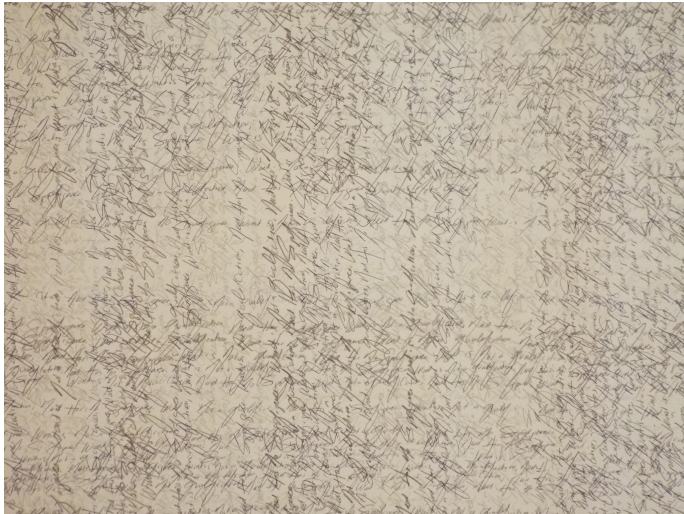


Sergio Gomez, New Beginnings 1, mixed media on canvas, 40" x 54"

## Suzanne Gorgas

Writing can be an act of documentation, a method of communication, a physical act of expelling what is inside, forcing it out. Writing “to” presupposes the absence of the other, while eradicating the text is a violent act of erasure, a covering or blinding, and in some cases, a redaction. My text-based work exists in the act of writing and the subsequent obfuscation. While the work is inherently part commentary on the nature of language and the frailty of communication, it also focuses on censorship (self and otherwise), a forced limiting of information, and purposeful obscuring of documentation. The text itself comes from poetry, fragments of letters, lists, obsessive compulsive scribble. It is mostly illegible, save a few phrases repeated by hand over and over obsessively and buried in overwriting. What was written is less important than the ghost image of what is left by the act of erasure itself, often violent. With the use of caustic materials such as saltwater, bleach, and sand, I cleanse the text to both remove and hide. What remains is the stain of language, a mere imprint. Something happened, something was recorded, something we are purposefully not being told. My work speaks of language lost, failed communication and a covering of the evidence...it is in a sense, a documentation of the silence that often follows abject violence. •

Suzanne Gorgas was born in Story City, Iowa, and resides in the Midwest. She studied drawing, biology, and psychology at Western Illinois University and holds an MFA in painting from Northern Illinois University. She has exhibited both nationally and internationally. Gorgas is an assistant professor of fine art and director of the Laura A. Sprague Gallery at Joliet Junior College. •



Suzanne Gorgas, 17 Hours (want is not a qualification, need has no significance), graphite, erasable ink, 17 hours, 35" x 46"

## Teresa Hofheimer

In this series of male nudes, the goal is to reveal, not to display. I am not looking for a likeness, but a glimpse of a private interior world. They are placed in an ambiguous space which allows for no pre-existing judgments. • I hope to capture, in some of these paintings, a sense of vulnerability—that moment when someone knows that they have been seen. It is a guarded response which reveals itself in subtle ways. • I also seek to portray the joy and freedom of being nude, observed and accepted. I paint them as they are, not as they are seen. •

Teresa Hofheimer is an artist living and working in Chicago. She has produced numerous bodies of work addressing diverse themes, including; the exploration of the male psyche, the powerful elegance of contemporary ballet, and the horrors of Chicago gun violence. Her work has been acquired for numerous corporate and private collections. Hofheimer was honored by The Art Institute of Chicago which chose her to create work for the nationally publicized public art exhibition, Cows on Parade. She has acted as curator for several fine art exhibitions, and opened the Hofheimer Gallery in Chicago in 2018. Hofheimer earned a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and continued with graduate studies at the International School of Art, Perugia, Italy. She is a well-published artist who exhibits widely. •



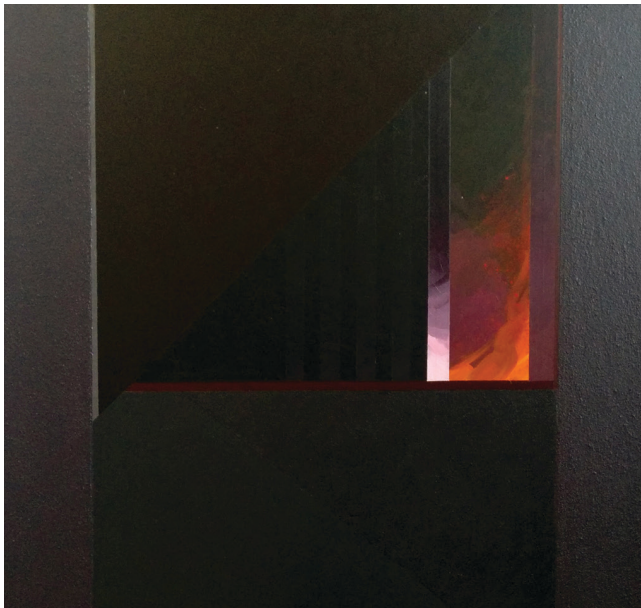
Teresa Hofheimer, *In the Middle*, oil on canvas, 60" x 48"

(Teresa Hofheimer, *In the Middle*) Honor Killing - An honor killing is the murder of a female by relatives who believe she has shamed the family and violated their honor. Smiling at a man can get a woman honor killed. The majority of honor killings are based on suspicions of adultery and unchaste behavior. Often these suspicions are false. Worldwide there is an honor killing every 90 minutes.

## Lelde Kalmite

The painting 'Til Death Do Us Part is a metaphorical representation of the institution and experience of marriage. I use abstract means to convey a point of view: that the passion which initiates mutual commitment can, in time, lead to a prison for the soul. This piece is one of my most direct uses of purely formal elements of painting to also make a philosophical/political point. •

Lelde Kalmite has spent her life living with, making, studying, and promoting art. Growing up in an artist's family, her art education continued with formal study leading to an MFA from the University of Chicago, then a PhD in art education from the University of Minnesota. She has worked as a teacher and arts administrator and, since 2012, has developed a curated exhibition program at the Bridgeport Art Center in Chicago. She also founded and serves as the curator of the Center for Latvian Diaspora Art in Cesis, Latvia. Her work has been exhibited throughout the Chicago area, the Midwest and Latvia. •



Lelde Kalmite, 'Til Death Do Us Part, acrylic on canvas, 36" x 36"

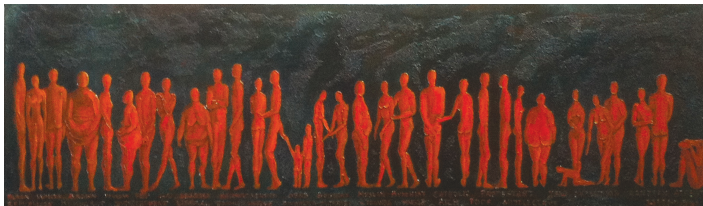
(Lelde Kalmite, 'Til Death Do Us Part ) Bride Burning - Predominant in India, Pakistan, and some Asian countries, brides may be burned alive if their dowries are insufficient; if their husbands or in-laws prefer to bring another woman into the family, if a man wishes to usurp his wife's wealth, etc. Called suttee, this practice goes back thousands of years. While now illegal in India, the estimate is that several thousand women die of bride burning there each year.



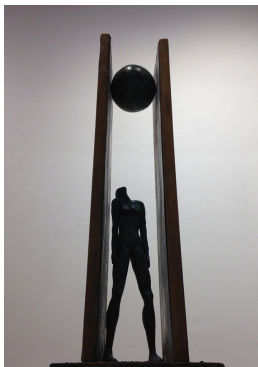
## Paula Kloczkowski Luberda

The intention and purpose of my work is to create a visual statement reflecting the situations and difficulties that humanity faces on a daily basis. In doing this, I address, bring attention and awareness to our similarities. My goal is to instill an appreciation and understanding of humanity's emotional, psychological, cultural, and economic struggles. • We are all basically the same, regardless of the image we project. We all have concerns, fears, anxieties... the focus of my work is to represent these emotions. They are a common thread in my imagery which often depicts figures in isolation, though not alone. • I hope to visually enable people to confront their feelings. I hope to stimulate change and help the viewer realize our similarities, ending the numerous labels that we attach to each other. By creating figures which have undefined ethnic, religious, and economic status, the viewer can connect to our shared humanity. In this way, we may be able to relate to each other's commonality rather than focusing on perceived differences. I strive to show our humanness. •

Paula Kloczkowski Luberda is an established artist who has been widely exhibited for more than two decades. Her work has been shown at the Ceramics Biennale in Gautang, South Africa; the Center for Emerging Art, Miami, Florida; and the Texas Artists Museum, Port Arthur, Texas. In the Mid-West, Kloczkowski Luberda has been exhibited at the Rockford Art Museum, the Evansville Art Museum, Indiana University, the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, North Central College, The Illinois Institute of Art-Chicago, and Harper College. Her paintings and sculptures are included in numerous public and private collections. •



Paula Kloczkowski Luberda, Label Makers, mixed media on masonite, 16.5" x 54.5"



Paula Kloczkowski Luberda, Anticipation, Mixed Media, 25"h x 7"w x 15"d

## Richard Laurent

I paint light because it is a meaningful alternative to darkness. • My studio process involves standing at an easel and applying oil paint in a traditional manner not unlike Velasquez or van Dyck or Lucian Freud. The deeply-rooted archetypal elements that I place in my compositions are intuitive, yet referential. I believe that one of the best experiences for an artist is to dream in pictures. Artist or not, everyone has the ability to live vicariously through art. A painting charged with dramatic implications invites interpretation from the viewer, and it is not being sanctimonious to say that true art transcends its medium and the moment. Some of my best times in the studio are when time stands still. •

Oil painter Richard Laurent works out of his studio in the historic Fine Arts Building, Chicago. Originally from Colorado, Richard received his formal visual training at Chicago's Institute of Design-the Neu Bauhaus School. He has continued his professional studies worldwide. His paintings have been featured in numerous national exhibitions including Oil Painters of America, Salon International Museum of Contemporary Masters, and Chicago Artists Interpret Shakespeare. He has also shown in gallery settings including George Billis, New York; Gallery H, Three Oaks, Michigan; Zia Gallery, Winnetka, Illinois; and Gallery Laluz, Chicago. Laurent's paintings are included in the permanent collections of the City of Denver, City of Schaumburg, Deloitte Consulting, Encyclopaedia Britannica, The Illinois Institute of Art, Wells Fargo, Bodine Electric, and private collections. His paintings and drawings are included in two monographs: Contemporary American Painting and Contemporary American Drawing, published by Jilin Fine Arts. •



Richard Laurent, Tower of Babel, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"



Richard Laurent, Book of Knowledge, oil on canvas, 36" x 36"

(Richard Laurent, Tower of Babel) In some places when a woman prepares to go out she smooths her clothes, grabs a handbag, then fills her mouth with stones—or a family member inserts them for her. This keeps women from “seducing” men with their words or the tone of their voices, from “babbling” about their opinions, and is the only way some females are allowed to “speak” in public. Since many cultures associate women with chaos, this action holds them in check and reminds the community that women are totally responsible for the actions of men.

(Richard Laurent, Book of Knowledge) In some places, too much knowledge can be a dangerous thing, and not only dangerous but fatal. Women and girls have been honor killed for learning to read, write, or use the Internet. They “shamed” their families with this “immoral behavior” and were murdered to restore family honor. Often, the only choice a female has is entomb her mind to save her life or educate herself at the risk of physical death.

Kathy Liao

My work is about relationships. It is a record of a moment. A portrait may begin with the person sitting in front of me, or a transient smile over FaceTime, and all that might get buried under layers of paint recalling how the sun felt the day he sat there. My mixed media work is painted from observations, layered with sharp and hazy memories and recorded snap-shot photos. With each painting, I am constantly re-establishing my relationship with the subject matter, being conscientious of my distance physically and emotionally. •

Kathy Liao received her MFA in painting at Boston University and her BFA in painting and drawing from the University of Washington. After graduate school, she moved to Seattle, maintaining a studio and showing her work in several galleries. Liao taught at Gage Academy of Art, as well as the University of Washington and Seattle University. In 2014, she became an assistant professor of art and the director of painting and printmaking at Missouri Western State University, St. Joseph, Missouri. Liao currently lives in Kansas City. •



Kathy Liao, Little Feet, oil on canvas, 40" x 30"



## Joyce Polance

In our political climate of polarization and fake news, I feel nothing is more important than authenticity. For me, this means a willingness to be vulnerable, revealing my inner chaotic experiences in my work. Through letting myself be known, I hope to inspire others to let themselves be known, forging genuine human connections as resistance to a world where we can't believe much of what we read. • I explore vulnerability through my subject matter and painting process. In my expressionist paintings, I apply paint thickly and abstractly then attack the work, throwing myself into it (using brushes or my fingers) with abandon. In my willingness to destroy that which I have just created, I allow something entirely new to emerge. • When I sense the painting authentically reflects an element of my own vulnerabilities, it is complete. •

Joyce Polance is a Chicago-based painter working in oils. • Polance has exhibited internationally and is the recipient of multiple grants and awards including six Chicago CAAP grants, a George Sugarman Foundation grant, two Judith Dawn Memorial grants, and a fellowship at Spertus Institute in Chicago. Her paintings are held internationally in private and corporate collections. • Polance was born in New York City in 1965. She attended Wesleyan University and received a BFA from the Fashion Institute of Technology. She lives and works in Chicago, and is represented by Judy Ferrara Gallery, Three Oaks, Michigan, and the Elephant Room, Chicago. •



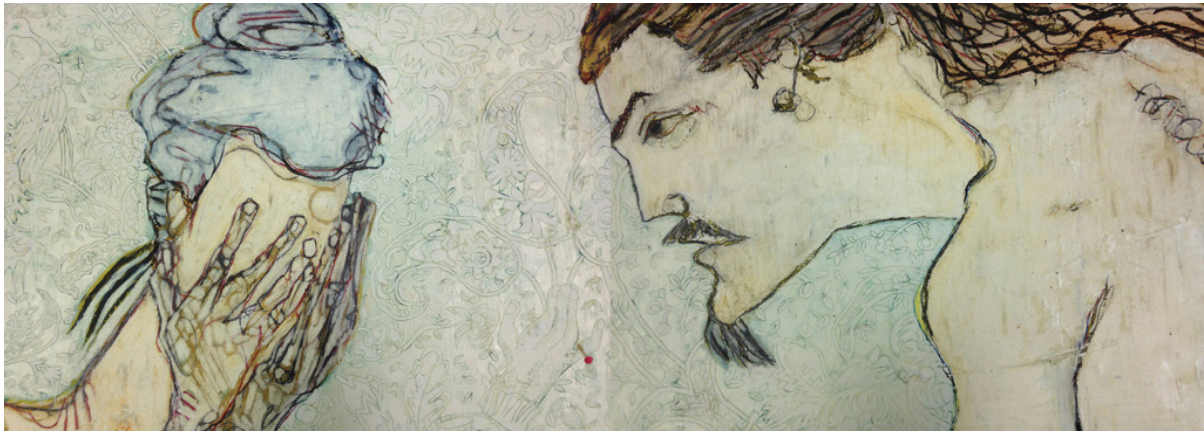
Joyce Polance, *Fault*, oil on canvas, 30" x 24"

(Joyce Polance, *Fault*) Human Trafficking - US law defines human trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a human being against their will by means of threat, force, coercion, abduction, fraud and/or deception. Trafficking always involves the abuse of power and the exchange of money for human beings. — *U.S State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report*

Nancy Rosen

I am a creator and a painter. It is what I was born to do, and what I have done since I was five. For me, this does not require much thinking, it is more like breathing. Whatever you see in my painting is your own reflection, like in a mirror. To me it is simple, instinctive, and essential. To you, it is whatever you choose to see. •

Nancy Rosen was born in Chicago. She received her BFA in painting and sculpture at the Kansas City Art Institute. Postgraduate, she ran her own hand-painted fabrics company in Chicago. After ending the company, she devoted herself to family and art; exhibiting in galleries, and teaching at the Evanston Art Center. Rosen's work is unique in a way that combines the human form and textile-inspired backgrounds. She utilizes oil bars on gessoed paper, often referring to them as "paint on a stick." A few years ago, Nancy was chosen out of a number of artists to have her work represent the character "Frankie Bergstein", played by Lily Tomlin on the Netflix series "Grace and Frankie." Her existing work has been used on countless sets throughout the show and she creates commissions for pieces written into the script. •



Nancy Rosen, Untitled, mixed media, 20" x 60"



Nancy Rosen, Another Sunday, mixed media, 30" x 44"

Lorraine Sack

My female figure paintings are as much about the women I'm painting as the work itself. I consult with them on their lives, how they want to be portrayed, and what they want to say. It is a collaboration between artist and model. The work evolves into a statement of power, giving a voice to women that is often not present in nude female paintings. While my painting education is very traditional with deep roots in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, I don't want the women I paint to be passive or sexualized. They may be sexual, but they own their own skin and are aware that they are being viewed. Just as the #MeToo movement is bringing important conversations to the forefront, I like to think I can contribute to the dialogue with images of beauty and strength—a truly positive image of real women. •

Lorraine Sack is a contemporary realist painter. She explores her love of subtle-to-vivid color harmonies in still-life and figure. Sack works in oil on linen, under natural light in her Tucson, Arizona studio. • Sack's training at Atelier Lack, in Minneapolis, MN, focused on the fine art of seeing nature truthfully. This training places her in the direct lineage of artists such as William Paxton of The Boston School of Art, and Jacques-Louis David of the 19th Century French Academy. • Her paintings have been recognized with awards through juried exhibitions at The Butler Institute of American Art, The Lexington Art League, The Hoosier Salon, The American Artist Magazine, The California Art Club, The Pastel Society of the West Coast, and The John F. & Anna Stacey Scholarship. Her work is in national, international, private and corporate collections. •



Lorraine Sack, Figure with Magenta Background, oil on canvas, 56" x 32"

Dominic Sansone

Working as a design engineer in the military industrial complex brought me face-to-face with warfare, violence, media and culture and gave me a unique perspective on each. From monuments to video games, the imagery we surround ourselves with has not only persuaded us to live in a society that profits from bloodshed and violence, but to thrive on it. From room-size installations that are complete immersive experiences to repetitive cast objects with industrial mass-produced sensibility, I use my sculptures to highlight the dangers of this path. My works don't answer questions or propose solutions. Rather, I try to make viewers pause and with more than a cursory glance, consider the visual culture of our cities, our entertainment, our public art, and media, and their impact on our lives. •

Sansone is a native of Chicago, and holds a BFA from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and an MFA from the Herron School of Art and Design, Indianapolis. Between completing his BFA and MFA, he spent two years working for an aerospace company producing fabrication and assembly drawings for satellites, military aircraft, and mobile artillery units. He also spent over a decade in the tradeshow industry where he oversaw worldwide exhibition programs for major multinational corporations. Sansone has exhibited in group and solo exhibitions across the United States. He is represented by Baang+Burne, New York City, and was recently one of the International Sculpture Center's Artists in Residence at Mana Contemporary in Jersey City, New Jersey. •



Dominic Sansone, JetBoyMachine!, resin coated urethane foam, catalpa, 42" x 60" x 9"

(Dominic Sansone, JetBoyMachine!) The history of child soldiers is as old as warfare itself. Currently, it is predominant in Africa, Burma, and parts of Indonesia. Both boys and girls are drafted. Current estimates are that 700,000 children ages 8 to early/mid-teens are in forced military service worldwide. In addition, some countries use children, the elderly, and both the mentally and physically disabled as human mine sweepers.



## Barbara Simcoe

The breadth of feminine archetypes is what interests me—woman as vessel of creativity, as intercessor, as of the earth, as mother, as primal aspect of the feminine/masculine dichotomy, as the complement of masculine divinity. I work with these archetypes in order to create images that function as metaphor. My primary intention is to give form to something that is non-visual and incomprehensible—to bring them within reach. The artworks come out of the belief that discord, disorientation and a conflicted stance between the integration of the internal and the external must be experienced to approach and attain the spiritual release that can regenerate wholeness. Such release can move our subconscious to reflection. • I depict female figurative imagery in terms of vulnerability—the figures are in stances sometimes of protection and concealment but are at the same time emergent. They are often in postures that are precariously balanced or in contradictory stances in relation to the settings. Augmenting this, they inhabit notional and intangible spaces composed of imagery from the natural world and architectural fragmentation. The spaces do not contain the figures in a concrete “reality,” rather they belong fittingly to the subconscious and metaphor. Figures in these environments invite the viewer to engage with and quietly participate in a mediated space that is ephemeral and intuitively accessed. •

Barbara Simcoe’s work can be found in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art, El Paso, Creighton University, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Simcoe earned her MFA at the University of North Texas and is a professor of art at the University of Nebraska, Omaha. •



Barbara Simcoe, She Shall Be Repaid, oil on panel, 10” x 14”



Barbara Simcoe, Hooded Woman, oil on paper, 30” x 22”

## Anne Smith Stephan

Painting in the abstract allows such great visceral possibilities. Using layers of oil paint and then digging and scraping away is much like exploring and searching one's mind—always looking, sometimes finding unsettling places, and other times, discovering tranquil and beautiful ones. •

Born in Davenport, Iowa, Anne Smith Stephan lives and paints in Wilmette, Illinois. She has taught classes in portraiture and oil painting at the Evanston Art Center. Smith Stephan studied at Northwestern University, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and received a BA in fine art and art history from Barat College, Lake Forest, Illinois. • A founding member and director of the Wilmette Arts Guild, Anne has long been involved in the Chicago and Chicago North Shore art scenes. Her abstract paintings—using multiple layers of paint beside excavated and re-exposed areas—have been included in numerous prestigious exhibitions, and have received many honors and awards. Her paintings are in many private collections throughout the country. •



Anne Smith Stephan, *Cold Ice*, oil on canvas, 30" x 48"



Anne Smith Stephan, *And Beyond*, oil on canvas, 30" x 48"

(Anne Smith Stephan, *And Beyond*) Bride Burning - Predominant in India, Pakistan, and some Asian countries, brides may be burned alive if their dowries are insufficient; if their husbands or in-laws prefer to bring another woman into the family, if a man wishes to usurp his wife's wealth, etc. Called suttee, this practice goes back thousands of years. While now illegal in India, the estimate is that several thousand women die of bride burning there each year.