

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

The Union College Visual Art Department presents:



May 20 - June 12  
Feigenbaum Center for Visual Art  
Crowell and West Galleries  
Opening Reception: May 20, 4:30-6:00 pm  
Union College, Schenectady, NY

## phosphene noun

phos·phene | \ 'fäs-, fēn \

### **Definition of *phosphene*:**

an impression of light that occurs without light entering the eye and is usually caused by stimulation of the retina

With one of the largest senior art exhibitions at Union College in recent history, viewers are invited to explore a variety of subjects and mediums within the gallery. The intention of this show is to stimulate the audience's psyche with what has driven our studies at Union and what has inspired us over the past four years. During their time at Union these students honed skills in sculpture, photography, painting, digital, and other mediums despite the pressure of the Covid-19 pandemic. Like phosphenes these artists explored new mediums and continued their practices in unconventional ways, and in unconventional places.

This show features 15 Union College Visual Art majors: Gabby Basil, Gavin Bibbins, Maggie Biondi, Trey Everett, Aram Festekjian, Ashley Harding, Cole Kammler, Samantha Kelley, Jessie Kirker, Dea Kothari, Anh Le, Melissa Lucano, Michelle Moina, Mallory Nelson, Rochelle Nuiqui, are exhibiting the culmination of their studies in the art department.

This exhibit is free and open to the public Monday- Friday 9am - 4pm, pending college Covid-19 regulations. Funded by the Visual Arts Department and Senior Research Grants.

Artists:

**Gabby Basil** is a Visual Arts and Biology double major from Schenectady, New York. During her time at Union, she has participated in Beekeeping Club, Octopus Garden, and Ornithology Club. As both an artist and a scientist, Gabby strives to bridge the gap between the two disciplines by creating scientific illustrations that depict the natural world. While her favorite medium is acrylic paint, she also loves to draw, paint with watercolors, and embroider. After graduation, she will be looking for field assistant positions in the western United States with the goal of going to graduate school for ornithology in the near future. As an artist, she hopes to be able to continue the practice of scientific illustration, and would like to keep applying it to her work and research in biology.

**Gavin Bibbins** is a Visual Arts Asian Studies Interdepartmental Major and Psychology Minor from Medford Massachusetts. Throughout his study at Union he has drawn inspiration from philosophy, religion, psychology, language and a host of other domains he has encountered in his studies. Gavin primarily works in digital mediums while also exploring connections with physical mediums like printmaking and sculpture.

**Maggie Biondi** is a Visual Arts major with a double minor in Digital Media and Russian. She is a 21 year old, LGBTQ+ artist from Whitney Point, New York. Her style of art has been heavily influenced by her mental health journey and her passion for increasing awareness about issues that people may face. Art has been a major piece in her personal journey in processing experiences and emotions. Maggie enjoys all mediums of art, from digital art, to printmaking, to ceramics. However, her favorite mediums include digital art, 3D art, and painting. Her thesis combines digital art, painting, and sculpture as a means to draw awareness to sexual assault.

**Trey Everett** is a Visual Arts major from Norfolk, Virginia. He first picked up a camera during his senior year of high school but didn't take it seriously until he got to college. While in college, he picked up various other artistic mediums, but none have stuck with me more than sculpture and photography (with photography being the more prevalent of the two). Once he graduates, he'll be heading back home to pursue photography full-time as well as possibly welding later on.

**Aram Festekjian**, based in Winchester, Massachusetts, has been honing his skills in sculpture and digital art since the start of the pandemic. Upon returning to Union College in person, Aram has been determined to utilize the tools and expertise his school provided to its fullest. He entered the new academic year with a clear vision of industrial design as his passion and future career. Aram has expanded his knowledge of sculpture by utilizing 3D modeling within the process of many of his sculptural works. His works combine imagination, craft, and technology into ideas to create impactful designs that shape experiences and change the perspectives of viewers. After graduation, Aram will strive to develop and progress the continuation of his work at the Rhode Island School of Design's graduate program.

**Ashley Harding** is a Visual Arts major with a concentration in Digital Media. She is a 22 year old artist from Long Island, New York. She has been creating art with the intention of finding a career in digital art/graphic design since her freshman year of high school. Her style of art has been greatly influenced by her personal life journey and passion for increasing awareness and understanding about the experiences/struggles people face as well as illustrating different perspectives about life. Ashley enjoys all mediums of art in the forms of, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, photography and especially digital art. However, her favorite mediums include digital art, 3D art, and code art. In addition to being an art student, Ashley is also a captain and member of the Union Women's Golf Team. After graduating from Union, Ashley is planning on enrolling in graduate school for her MFA in Graphic Design/Visual

Communications where her artistic journey and skills will continue to grow.

**Cole Kammler** is a senior at Union College from New Canaan, CT majoring in Studio Fine Arts. He primarily works in steel and clay, however, other explored mediums include plaster and foam. His primary interest is in sculpture. Upon graduation, Cole will be taking the time to explore various career paths in this degree.

**Samantha Kelley** is from Burnt Hills, NY, and is majoring in both studio arts and psychology at Union College. For her thesis, she has been focusing on using 3D computer modeling to create scenes and animations based on the psychological impact the last two years has had on many people. After graduation, she plans to continue working with 3D modeling and eventually work in game development.

**Jessie Kirker** is a senior at Union College from Latham, NY majoring in Studio Fine Arts. She works primarily in oil paint on large-scale canvases. Other than oil paint Jessie also works photographically and utilizes her photographs as source material for her paintings. Upon graduation, Jessie will continue to create artwork and has aspirations of eventually receiving a master's in fine arts.

**Dhea Kothari's** art honors her Indian culture while also creating a space for the political examination of gender across generations. Kothari double-majored in studio arts and psychology. During her time at Union, she enjoyed exploring mediums like oil painting and sculpture. An aspiring clinical psychologist and artist, Kothari is from Mumbai, India. Following graduation, she hopes to complete a PhD in clinical psychology and obtain an MFA in visual arts.

**Anh Le** is a visual arts major from Ha Noi, Viet Nam. He works in various mediums including oil painting, charcoal drawing, and sculpture. His work explores self image and identity through intimate views into the imagined lives of Asian people while engaging with queer art history as well as Vietnamese culture and tradition.

**Melissa Lucano** is an Interdepartmental Mathematics and Visual Arts major from New York City. While in college she explored different art mediums and especially enjoyed printmaking and oil painting. Much of her work is inspired by her Latin American background. She enjoys showcasing her Mexican-Ecuadorian heritage as well as showing her appreciation for other cultures through their folklore stories, traditional clothing and celebrations. After graduation, she will be going abroad to Taiwan as a Fulbright ETA and also hopes to bring art to the classroom

**Michelle Moina-Solano** is an ID Psychology and Studio Fine Arts major with a minor in Film Studies. She is an Ecuadorian-American from New York City who gained the love for art from her everyday life as a New Yorker. She wishes to make her art both impactful and resourceful. For this reason her art concentration is in ceramics and metal work.

**Mallory Nelson** is a Studio Fine Arts major from Wilsonville, Oregon. In her time at Union she has explored a variety of disciplines including, biology, classics, religious studies, and computer science. In her thesis she combines digital and painting techniques to bring to life extraterrestrial landscapes inspired by goddesses from ancient Greece and Rome.

**Rochelle-Leah Barcelona Nuqui**, is an interdepartmental Visual Arts and Theatre major from Fontana, California. Her style of art has been built around her self-identity, especially upon her ethnic background as a first generation Filipina American. She enjoys a mixture of art mediums but always loves to incorporate hand drawing in any of her projects as best as she can. In addition to being an art student, Rochelle is very involved in Union College Theater department's productions and is a part of the college's softball team. After graduating from Union College, she intends to take her art into the entertainment industry, whether it be sports, advertising, animation, or in education. This upcoming summer she is going to be assistant coaching a club softball team and taking time to herself before going to Graduate school.