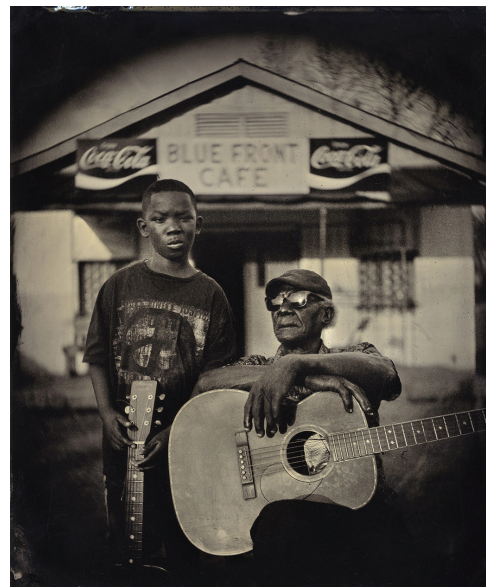
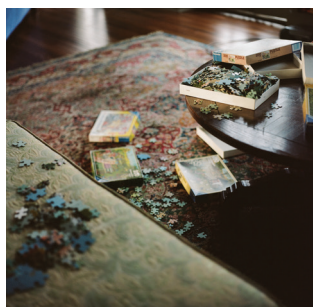
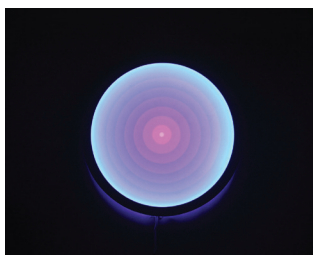


SOUTH ARTS 2020

SOUTHERN PRIZE & STATE FELLOWS



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Bo Bartlett Center
Columbus State University

August 15, 2020 - January 8, 2021

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From the Director

As we celebrate the recipients of this year's Southern Prize and State Fellowships, it is important to note how truly remarkable 2020 has been. Once we can look back at this year from the vantage of history, the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the #BlackLivesMatter movement will undoubtedly loom large. On the surface, these two items might seem distinct and coincidental: a virus reshaping our interactions across society and the righteous protestation of systemic racism. Yet, digging down beyond the surface, the two are deeply intertwined and represent a necessary realization that we, as a country, must do better to fight inequity; communities that have been the most undercut historically are the ones being hit the hardest by the immediacy of the coronavirus. The timing of these two items is no coincidence, and evidence that we need to do better for our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color fellow Americans as we fight generations of malfeasance.

Much of the Southern Prize and State Fellowships program – the application process when hundreds of artists submitted their work for consideration as well as our series of panels adjudicating and recommending recipients – occurred before either of these items grabbed headlines earlier this year. Even so, the works of our nine State Fellows speak directly to the moment. During the panel process to determine the 2020 Southern Prize winner and finalist, our jurors were struck by the hyper-relevancy of Sherrill Roland's work and its representation of inequity. The immediate power of nature meditated on by Carlton Nell also captured our jurors' attention. The selection of these two artists respectively as Southern Prize winner and finalist seems almost prophetic as we collectively reckon with the realities of racial inequality and return to a deeper reverence for the great power of our natural world.

The Southern Prize and State Fellowships provide direct financial support to artists. Each of our nine State Fellows receive a \$5,000 award. The Southern Prize finalist receives an additional \$10,000, and the Southern Prize winner receives an additional \$25,000 as well as a two-week residency with The Hambidge Center for Creative Arts and Sciences. Now more than ever, we are proud to provide unrestricted funds to artists, and we thank all the donors and supporters for allowing us to make this happen.

We are so proud to support these nine artists and name them as South Arts' 2020 Southern Prize and State Fellowship recipients. Through this catalogue and the exhibition at the Bo Bartlett Center at Columbus State University, please join us in celebrating their success.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzette M. Surkamer". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Suzette" and last name "Surkamer" clearly legible.

Suzette M. Surkamer
Executive Director, South Arts

Reflections of the Contemporary South

by Wim Roefs

Womanhood.
Black male masculinity.
Questions about memory and perception.
The American criminal justice system.
Experiencing the observed world.
American politics.
Contemplating nature at an intangible, micro level – through sound installations, no less.

None of these things scream “Southern art” in any grits-and-gravy kind of way. Such themes could be explored by artists anywhere in the United States and beyond. That South Arts 2020 State Fellows tangled with these issues confirms that contemporary art made in the region can and should be viewed within a national and international context, too, not just from a Southern perspective.

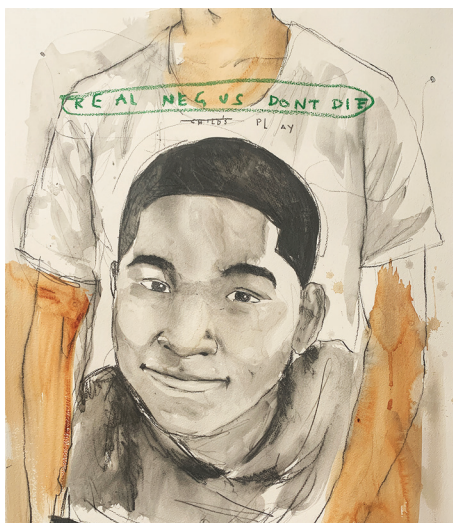


Bill Steber, *Trenton Ayers*, 2017, digital print from wetplate collodion tintype, 13” x 19”

That’s not a news flash. Even much art that explores Southern themes or has quintessential Southern characteristics can be and is discussed within a broader contemporary art context. Miranda Lash and Trevor Schoonmaker, for instance, show this in their 2016 exhibition catalogue *Southern Accents: Seeking the American South in Contemporary Art*. Several authors in another catalogue, 2018’s *My Soul Has Grown Deep: Black Art From the American South*, discuss work by self-taught African-American artists within that broader context.

Still, it’s noteworthy that few South Arts State Fellows in the project’s first four years have displayed an explicit Southern identity or subject matter. About a half dozen of the previous 27 fellowship winners from Tennessee, South and North Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, Georgia, Florida and Alabama did so. Among the 2020 crop, the numbers also are low. Only two artists state an explicit identification with the South, including one who isn’t a native. But not surprisingly, regional identity and background still might play a part in the work of several others, too.

Bill Steber’s and Karen Ocker’s work easily fits Schoonmaker’s framework of what “Southern” in contemporary art may amount to based on subject, technique, aesthetic, style and attitude. Tennessee native and resident Steber strongly identifies as a Southerner and aims to preserve and celebrate Southern culture with his photographs of blues musicians and others as well as Southern locales. Using tintype and ambrotype techniques, Steber adds a touch of nostalgia.



Fahamu Pecou, *Real NEGUS Don't Die: Child's Play (Tamir Rice)*, 2019, mixed media on paper, 33" x 25"

Louisiana's Ocker celebrates the spirit of New Orleans through mixed media portrait assemblages of cultural icons. Using found and repurposed materials further connects her to Southern traditions in visual art but also to general post-modern practice, which has embraced media and techniques long associated with self-taught artists, including those in the South. A New Jersey native and former New York resident, Ocker identifies with New Orleans, where she moved almost two decades ago. Experiences there, including effects of 2005's Hurricane Katrina, have influenced her outlook and art.

Other 2020 fellows illustrate the potential complexity of contemporary regional identities. They also show that themes or subjects alone do not determine levels of the "Southern," as Schoonmaker's hint at a definition of that concept also suggests. Even artists not discussing their work explicitly in terms of "Southernness" might produce work influenced by their regional background.

Mississippi's Ashleigh Coleman through photographs explores her realization that there's more to womanhood than motherhood, but the domestic sphere she depicts is her own. The work has a distinct barefoot-in-Mississippi feel, the relative absence of bare feet notwithstanding. The conservative Southern milieu might have exacerbated the discrepancy between her old and new personal expectations and desires as a woman, enforcing the impetus for her work. And as a born-and-raised Southerner, Coleman might have come to different results than, say, a woman in New England with similar concerns might have.

Alabama native and resident Carlton Nell, the South Arts 2020 Southern Prize Finalist, or runner up, examines the immediate environment through exquisite silver-on-film drawings of clouds. Studying his surroundings' formal, abstract properties, he hopes for "a deeper experience" of them. Nell's aim could be shared by artists anywhere, but his results might differ; his physical environment likely is different, as might be the way he, as a Southerner, relates. References to a Southern "sense of place" are tedious in their inevitability, but even if this sense were developed no more in the U.S. South than in other traditionally rural societies, it might have developed differently.

Georgia's Fahamu Pecou, born in New York City but raised in South Carolina, exemplifies the fusing of regional and not-so regional themes and identity. He explores "perceptions of Black male masculinity" without referring to the South in his statement. Pecou nevertheless was included in Lasch's and Schoonmaker's *Southern Accents* exhibition with a 2013 painting referencing the black male and the "chit'lin circuit." His essay in that show's catalogue discussed the influence on him of Southern culture, specifically the "rich and layered southern aesthetic" of hip hop performers Outkast and Goodie Mob. Pecou also appreciated the musicians' challenge of "accepted notions" about the South.

None of the remaining four 2020 State Fellows addresses Southern culture in any tangible fashion. South Carolina's Kristi Ryba's paintings are a biting critique of the United States' moral, ethical and political crisis, focused on the current president. The California native probably didn't need the widespread, palpable support for the president in the region to trigger the work, but chances are it didn't hurt.

North Carolina native and resident Sherrill Roland, the 2020 Southern Prize Winner, reimagines "the social and political implications" of innocence, identity and community "within the context of the American criminal justice system." The impetus for the work is Roland's own wrongful imprisonment for a crime for which he was exonerated. This happened in Washington, D.C., although the artist does not mention this in his statement. For his *Jumpsuit Project*, Roland walked around in a prison-style orange jumpsuit for a year to address people's "prejudices about the jumpsuit, my body, and the issues surrounding incarceration." He did so at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, as a graduate student, but the implications of his ordeal transcends the region.



Sherrill Roland, *February 2014 Issue*, 2018, ArtForum International February 2014 issue, toilet paper, primer paint, Kool-Aid, Sharpie marker and steel, 28" x 24"

Kentucky native and resident Letitia Quesenberry and Florida's Alba Triana, a Colombia native, seem to challenge the hurried, frantic nature of much of contemporary life. They provide a breather but not by offering a rocking chair on the porch, instead activating the senses and elevating awareness of our surroundings through rather technical means. Quesenberry uses tinted resin, color-correction film, beeswax, sanded plexiglass, fluorescent paint, mica dust, coal slag and LED lights to create two- and three-dimensional artworks. The work plays with memory and perception, destabilizing visibility and activating "the boundaries of optical experience." She aims to create "structure in the face of explicit uncertainty" while undermining "the clamor for decisive action" by inviting "more subtle encounters."

Triana's high-tech installations are her way of exploring how nature operates at an intangible, micro level. Spheres orbit around coils, animated by a magnetic field. Audio signals, inaudible to the public, move a string between two points in a light sculpture, which causes constantly changing sound waves. Simultaneously, resonating tubes hanging around the sculpture turn the inaudible audio signals into sound after all, echoing the sound that the string only reveals visually. "My goal," Triana says, "is to induce a state of awe."

The 2020 state fellows as a group are not unusual within the current South. For different groups in the region these days, political scientists Christopher A. Cooper and H. Gibbs Knotts have pointed out, "Southernness" might be less important than "a host of other identifiers." The identifiers include race, gender, political orientation and familial lineage, they wrote in their 2017 book *The Resilience of Southern Identity*. The co-existence of several identifiers, the absence of a singular identity, Southern or otherwise, seems to apply to many of the 2020 state fellows.

Wim Roefs is the curator of the South Arts 2020 Southern Prize and State Fellows exhibition. He is the board chair of 701 Center for Contemporary Art and owner of if ART Gallery, both in Columbia, S.C.



**2020 Mississippi Fellow
Ashleigh Coleman**

Ackerman, MS, photographer Ashleigh Coleman (b. 1983, Charlottesville, VA) has had solo exhibitions at Mississippi's Oxford Treehouse Gallery in Oxford and Fischer Galleries in Jackson; the University of Mississippi; Claire Elizabeth Gallery in New Orleans; and at Strickland's in Concord, GA. Since 2016, she also has shown in some 40 groups shows in a dozen states and Barcelona, Spain, including at the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester, Mass.; the Museum of the Mississippi Delta in Greenwood; and iLon Gallery and Soho Gallery, both in New York City. In addition to some 20 online publications, Coleman's work has been published in *Southern Living*, *Oxford American Magazine*, *Garden & Gun* and other publications. She is a founding member of the photographers' group Due South Co. and holds degrees in art history and English from the University of South Carolina in Columbia.

Artist Statement:

Growing up, I internalized an idea of womanhood as one primarily fulfilled by responsibilities as a mother. She decorates winsomely for holidays, plans elaborate homemade birthday parties, spends hours playing games with her children.

But what if I slowly discovered I am not who I thought I would be as a woman, as a mother? What if, as Leif Enger wrote in *Virgil Wander*, "[t]he evidence of my life lay before me, and I was unconvinced."

The reality is that everyday mishaps feel shocking. Noise threatens to unglue. Baking rarely occurs. I am terrified of being used up, of losing myself, of not actually knowing what coherent adult thoughts feel or sound like anymore.

Mercifully, I discovered that photographing the frustration, which often results from childishness colliding with adult expectations for a day, illuminates a dim path through the Sisyphean mess. My internal landscape quiets. These are my people. Much needed perspective charges onto the horizon: maybe not in that exact second, maybe a month or two later — they are growing — destructive curiosity mellowing, possibly. Humor arrives.

"It's a mess, aint it Sherriff?" "If it aint it'll do till a mess gets here." (Cormac McCarthy, *No Country for Old Men*)

These are glimpses into a woman coming to terms with the quotidian mystery of motherhood, into staking out the joy in the chaos, into being mother and being photographer — outside, looking in; inside, looking in — into learning to be here.



When She Kept Turning the Stove On, 2019,
archival digital print, 16" x 16"



Seven Puzzles in Three Minutes, 2019,
archival digital print, 16" x 16"

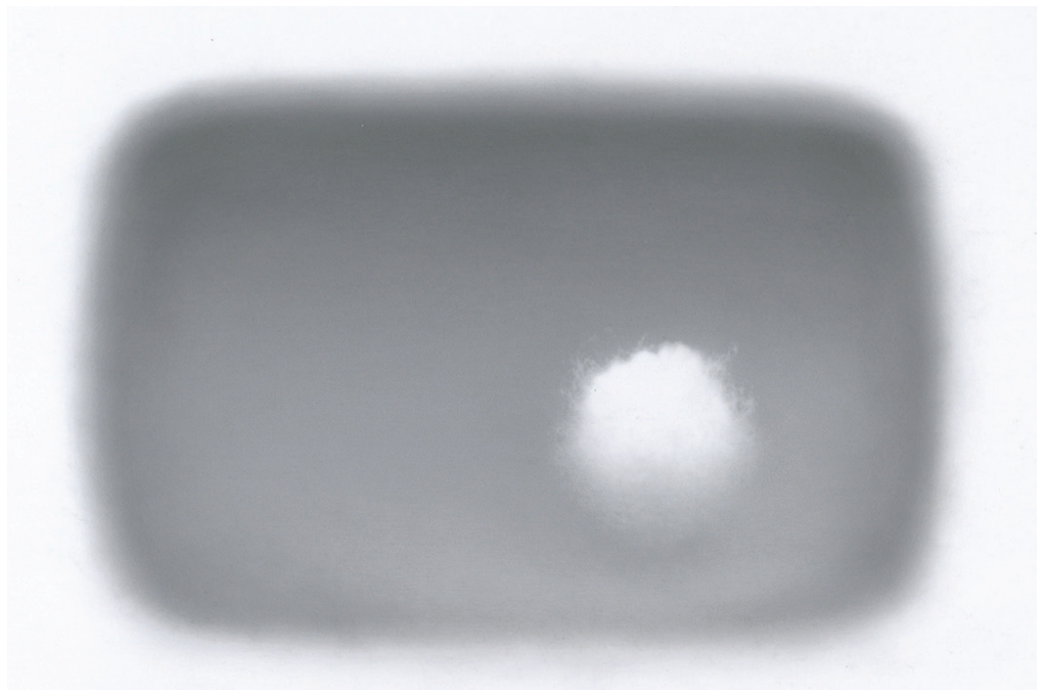
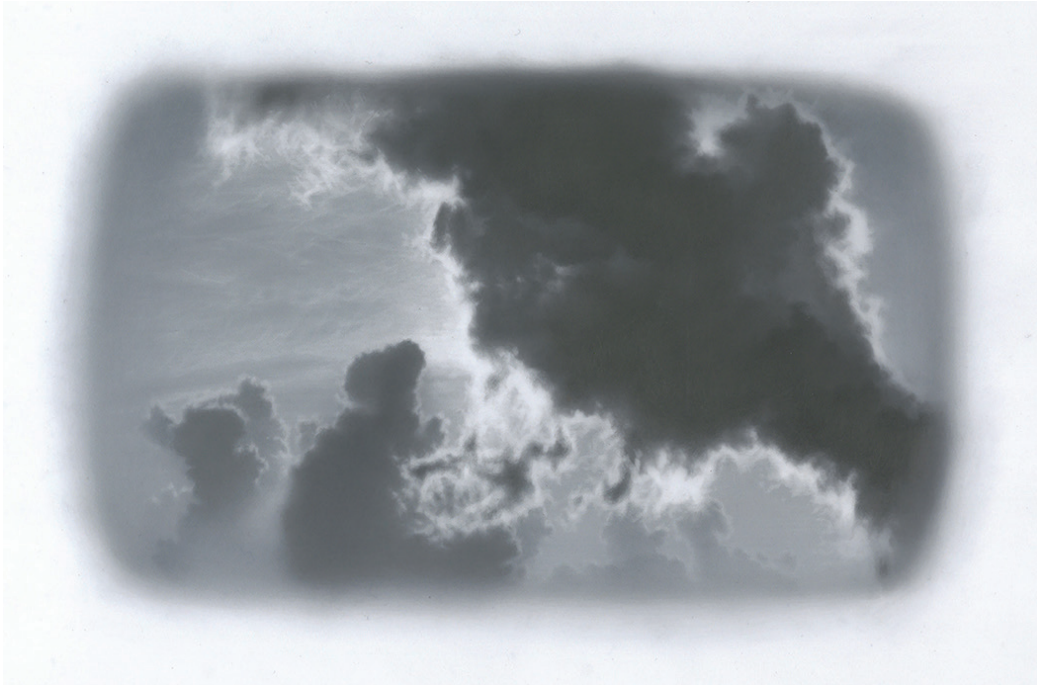


**2020 Alabama Fellow and Southern Prize Finalist
Carlton Nell**

Opelika, AL, painter and draftsman Carlton Nell (b. 1962, Mobile, AL) has had solo exhibitions at the Wiregrass Museum of Art in Dothan, the Huntsville Museum of Art and Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, all in Alabama; the Chattahoochee Valley Art Museum in LaGrange, GA; Nancy Hoffman Gallery in New York City; and Thomas Deans Fine Art in Atlanta, GA. His work has been in dozens of group exhibitions throughout the South and in New York, New Jersey, Illinois and California, including at The Amory Show in New York City; the Birmingham Museum of Art and the Mobile Museum of Art, both in Alabama; the San Francisco Fine Art Fair; Art Chicago International Art Fair; the Kentucky Museum of Arts + Design in Louisville; Faye Gold Gallery and Marcia Wood Gallery, both in Atlanta, GA; the Columbus Museum of Art in Georgia; Art Basel/ Miami Beach in Miami, FL; and Florida's St. Petersburg Center for the Arts. Nell's work is in the collections of the Birmingham Museum, Huntsville Museum, Montgomery Museum and Auburn's Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, all in Alabama; Georgia's LaGrange Art Museum; the Evansville Museum of Art, Science and History in Indiana; and the U.S. Department of State in Arlington, VA. Nell holds an MFA from Georgia State University and a BFA from Auburn University, where he teaches.

Artist Statement:

These silver drawings are part of ongoing work expressing thoughts that originate from direct observation of immediate visual surroundings. My interest is how abstract visual properties — shape, tone, pattern, scale, etc. — form a framework for seeing the world. By using these properties as a prism with which to view and suspend the observed world, my hope is that it leads to a deeper experience of it.



Top: *Composition 298*.
Bottom: *Composition 296*.
Each 2019, silver on film, 4" x 7"



**2020 Louisiana Fellow
Karen Ocker**

New Orleans artist Karen Ocker (b. 1970, Neptune, NJ) in the past decade has exhibited widely and frequently in New Orleans, LA. In the city, she has shown at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, the McKenna Museum of African American Art, the Contemporary Art Center New Orleans, the New Orleans Museum of Art and the New Orleans Art Center. Among other venues where Ocker has exhibited in the city are the Second Story Gallery, Treo Gallery, Angela King Gallery Studio, the Creative Alliance of New Orleans (CANO), the Arts Council of New Orleans Gallery, Ariodante Gallery, Jazz and Heritage Gallery and The Foundry. She twice was represented at *Prospect* satellite exhibitions. Ocker's work is in the permanent collection of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation; the Blues Hall of Fame in Memphis, TN; and the Luciano Benetton *imago mundi* collection in Italy. Ocker has a BFA in graphic design from the School of Visual Arts, New York City.

Artist Statement:

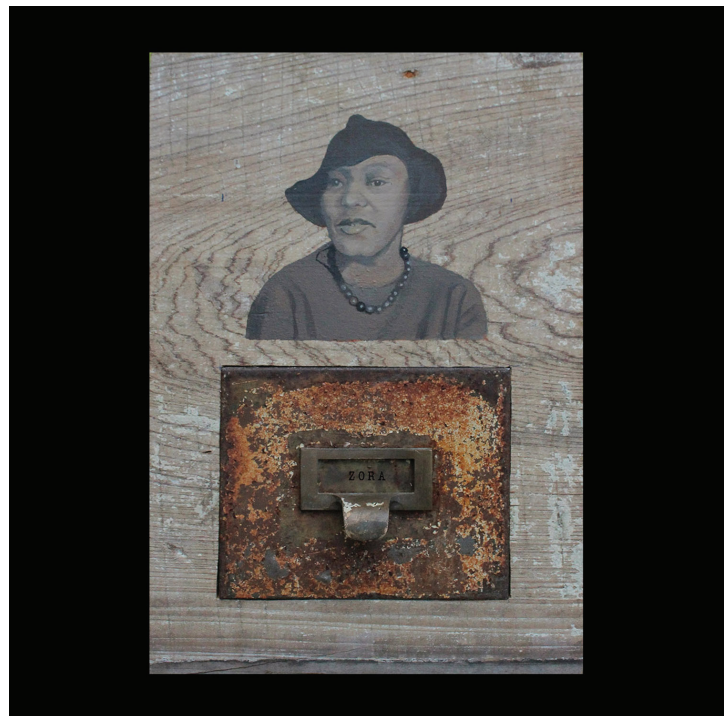
This series of paintings pays tribute to the music, history, magic and indomitable spirit of New Orleans, which exists even in the face of devastation, tragedy or loss. That spirit was evident in 2005 during and after Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent floods. Those floods were the pivotal moment that changed my trajectory. I abandoned working as a graphic designer and began painting full time. It felt like the world had ended. I had nothing to lose.

My medium is directly influenced by my grandmother, who introduced me to painting when I was a small child. Other materials and the techniques I use are influenced by what I amassed from debris piles after Katrina and by the new tools that I learned to use rebuilding my flooded home. My work gives new life and beauty to things others have discarded.



Tribute to Amédée Ardoin, 2018,
Oil on birch plywood, reclaimed
wood, antique accordion parts and
frame, 18" x 18" x 5"

Zora Neale Hurston, 2018, oil,
reclaimed cypress and card
catalog parts, 12" x 7"
(Collection of Aaron and
Elizabeth Ahlqvist)





**2020 Georgia Fellow
Fahamu Pecou**

Atlanta, GA, artist Fahamu Pecou (b. 1975, Brooklyn, NY), who grew up in South Carolina, in 2017 had a retrospective exhibition, *Miroirs de l'Homme*, at the Collection Societe Generale in Paris, France. Among Pecou's other solo exhibitions are those at Backslash Gallery in Paris; the High Museum and Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum, both in Atlanta; the African American Museum in Philadelphia, PA; the University of New Hampshire's Museum of Art in Durham; the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art in Charleston, SC; and galleries in New York City, Los Angeles and Dallas. Group shows in which he was represented include those at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, AR; the Montclair Art Museum in New Jersey; the Oakland Museum of California; the 21c Museum in Oklahoma City; the Speed Art Museum in Lexington, KY; Duke University's Nasher Museum of Art in Durham, NC; the Minneapolis Institute of Art in Minnesota; and the Columbia Museum of Art in South Carolina. His work is in the Paul R. Jones Collection; the collections of the Societe General and High, Nasher and Crystal Bridges Museums; the Smithsonian Museum of African American Art and Culture in Washington, DC; the Seattle Art Museum in Washington state; and the Clark Atlanta University Art Collection and the Museum of Contemporary Art Georgia, both in Atlanta. Pecou received his BFA from the Atlanta College of Art and his MA and Ph.D., from Emory University.

Artist Statement:

Through paintings, drawings and performance-based work, I work to complicate various images and representations that inform perceptions of Black male masculinity. By engaging the various stereotypes and misconceptions about Black men — both those imposed and those assumed — I attempt a critical intervention concerning our collective understandings of Black identity.

In staged photo shoots and performances, I embody stereotypes about Black males as a way of exploring and subverting them. Subsequently, I engage these stylized images in dramatic paintings and drawings, often incorporating various expressions of the African Diaspora, which includes the visual iconography of Yoruba (Ifa) spirituality, the somatic attitude of hip-hop bravado, and philosophy of the *négritude* movement.

In mining the Black experience across time and place, I can dynamically engage my themes with works that despite being rooted in the Black experience, provide meaningful engagement and insights across all walks of life.



Black Skin White Masks, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 60" x 48"



2020 Kentucky Fellow Letitia Quesenberry

Louisville, KY, artist and native Letitia Quesenberry (b. 1971) has had solo or two-person exhibitions in more than a half-dozen states, including at Smack Mellon, 57W57arts and Ryan Lee Gallery in New York City; the 21c Museum, Spaulding University, Quappi Projects and Zephyr Gallery in Louisville; Pieter PASD in Los Angeles, CA; and Mississippi State University in Starkville. Her work has been in more than three dozen groups shows, including those at the KMAC Museum and Speed Art Museum in Louisville; the Indianapolis Museum of Contemporary Art and DePauw University in Indiana; Nevada's University of Reno; the 21c Museum in Cincinnati, OH, and Bentonville, AR; the Dean Jenson Gallery in Milwaukee, WI; and the United States Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden. Quesenberry's work is in the collection of the Speed Museum and 21c Museum. She holds a BFA from the University of Cincinnati.

Artist Statement:

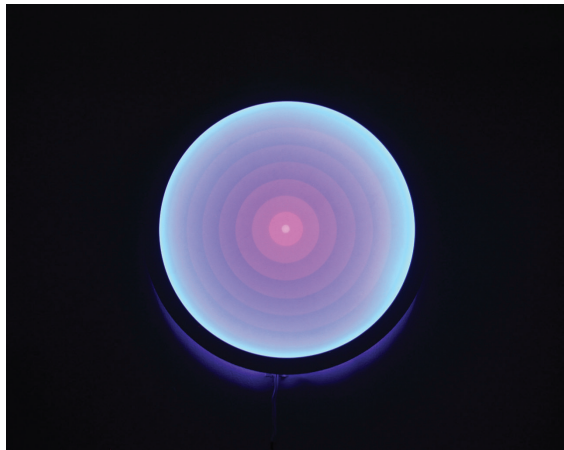
Hypnotic bewilderment.

Attempts at structure in the face of explicit uncertainty.

To me, the clamor for constant decisive action invites a contrast of more subtle encounters. I use abstract filters, color and light as a means to activate the boundaries of optical experience. My creative efforts focus on the limitations of memory and questions about perception. These concerns involve the cultivation of an aesthetic inscrutability, a kind of visual veiling that destabilizes visibility. To this end, I work with drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, text and light. I combine semi-transparent materials such as tinted resin, color correction film, beeswax and sanded plexiglass with reflective or opaque materials such as fluorescent paint, mica dust and coal slag.

Several concurrent series reveal my recent observations of space, color and light. Using LEDs, I build geometric boxes and room-sized installations where layered concentric bands of color film change hue in an unpredictable motion. The combination of semi-opaque layers illuminated by slowly changing lights creates a pulsing visual effect. Shapes and colors advance and recede in an endless hypnotic loop.

The BLSH series takes the form of the light boxes but instead uses reflected color and depth rather than light itself for an overall more subdued effect. Other ongoing series use the visual structure of SX70 Polaroids as a jumping off point. My labor-intensive process involves building dimensional frames to house layers of specific material elements. Squares bounded by rectangles contain recurrent shapes, patterns and symbols – an imagined architecture for ephemerality, desire, loss.



hyperspace 30, 2018, panel, lacquer, plexiglass, film, resin and LED, 34" diameter x 4"

as of yet, 2020, panel, polished plaster, graphite, mirror, glitter, film, paint, wax, plexiglass and resin, dimensions variable (individual components, 17" x 14" x 1" each)





**2020 North Carolina Fellow and Southern Prize Winner
Sherrill Roland**

Raleigh, NC, artist Sherrill Roland (b. 1984, Asheville, NC) has had solo exhibitions at Georgetown University in Washington, DC; the Borough of Manhattan Community College in New York City and Artspace in Raleigh and Greensboro Project Space, both in North Carolina. Among group shows in which he was represented are those at the Studio Museum in Harlem and three other venues in New York City; the Weatherspoon Art Museum in Greensboro and the Harvey Gantt Center for African American Arts + Culture in Charlotte, both in North Carolina; CAM Houston in Texas; Addison Gallery of American Art in Andover, MA; and Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. At many of those venues and others, Roland has presented performances, including at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Cleveland, OH; Princeton University in New Jersey; and Alcatraz Island and Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), both in California. Roland holds an BFA and MFA from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and studied at Manchester Metropolitan University in Britain and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine.

Artist Statement:

My interdisciplinary practice addresses the complex construction of these three core entities – innocence, identity, and community – and reimagines their social and political implications in the context of the American criminal justice system.

For more than three years, I was forced to relinquish control of my life to the criminal justice system due to wrongful incarceration. After spending ten months in jail for a crime for which I later was exonerated, I looked to art as a vehicle for self-reflection and an outlet for emotional release. I began a year-long performance while a student at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro in which I wore an orange jumpsuit every day until graduation. The Jumpsuit Project challenges audiences to address their prejudices about the jumpsuit, my body, and the issues surrounding incarceration. The work reshapes the narrative of the incarcerated and provides support for those most impacted. By sharing my story, and creating a space for others to share, I work to illuminate the invisible costs, damages and burdens of incarceration.

As I migrate through traditional and non-traditional art spaces, I recognize the need to expand the conversation surrounding incarceration. Recent work incorporates the voices of the formerly incarcerated, increases the access of audiences to current resources, and provides new forms of content through performance, sculpture, drawing and community workshops.



Jumpsuit Project, Edition 2/10, 2017–2018, orange jumpsuit, orange duct tape and four photographs, dimensions variable (as installed in Fictions, a group exhibition at the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York City, 2017–2018)



**2020 South Carolina Fellow
Kristi Ryba**

Charleston, SC, painter, printmaker and video artist Kristi Ryba (b. 1951, Walnut Creek, CA) in 2018 won second place, with purchase prize, at *ArtFields*, the annual exhibition and competition of Southern art in Lake City, SC. She was selected for the *701 CCA South Carolina Biennial 2015, 2017 and 2019* at Columbia's 701 Center for Contemporary Art. Ryba has had solo exhibitions at Waterworks Visual Arts Center in Salisbury, NC; the Sumter (SC) County Gallery of Art; Dialectic Design Studios in Charlotte, NC; Columbia College in Columbia, SC; and the Corrigan Gallery, DuBose Heyward Hall, the Dock Street Theater and the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston. Her work has been shown in more than three-dozen group exhibitions and film festivals across the country, including at Southern Ohio Museum in Portsmouth; the McColl Center for Visual Art and the Mint Museum in Charlotte, N.C.; New York's Soho 20 Gallery, Marymount Manhattan College, Barnard College and Silo; Ink Shop Printmaking Center & Olive Branch Press in Ithaca, NY; Florida Printmaking Society in Jacksonville; Boise State University in Idaho; City Gallery at Waterfront Park, The Southern and Redux Contemporary Art Center, all in Charleston; and the Gertrude Herbert Institute of Art in Augusta, GA. She earned a BA from the College of Charleston and an MFA from Vermont College in Montpelier, Vt. Ryba also studied at Studio Camnitzer in Valdottavo, Lucca, Italy.

Artist Statement:

Over the last several years, my interest in the study of Medieval and Renaissance art has informed my work. This series of paintings is based on images from centuries ago that serve as a vehicle to simplify an urgent message by providing symbolic and instructional imagery to illustrate and illuminate the leadership crisis we are in. All the elaborate, gold surroundings and messages of morality and ethics correspond with what is happening in our government. Among those are the gutting of our social safety net and health care; eliminating environmental protections; the lack of restraint in spending money on personal enrichment and pleasure; and the build-up of military spending and deficit in international diplomacy.



Left: *Pope Sixtus IV*, 2018, 40" x 30" x 2".
 Right: *Massacre of the Innocents*, 2018, 24" x 18" x 2"
 Each egg tempera and 22K gold leaf on panel



**2020 Tennessee Fellow
Bill Steber**

Murfreesboro, TN, photographer Bill Steber (b. 1965, Centerville, TN) has shown in some three dozen exhibitions throughout the South and in California, Illinois, New York, Washington, D.C. and Belgium. Among them are those at Carl Hammer Gallery in Chicago; Box Gallery in Brussels; the Gregg Museum of Art & Design at N.C. State University in Durham; the Halsey Institute for Contemporary Art in Charleston, SC; the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon, NY; SABA photo gallery in New York City; the Wiregrass Art Museum in Dothan, AL; Mississippi's Highway 61 Blues Museum in Leland, Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale and Tunica Museum; the Center for Southern Folklore in Memphis, TN; the Sonoma County Museum of Art in Santa Rosa, CA; and the Cheekwood Museum of Art in Nashville. The former staff photographer of Nashville's *Tennessean* newspaper is included in *Southbound*, a major exhibition of Southern photography currently traveling throughout the region. His work has been published in *Newsweek*, *Oxford American Magazine*, *Living Blues Magazine* and other publications. Steber has documented Mississippi's blues culture for two decades and holds graduate degrees in English and photography from Murfreesboro's Middle Tennessee State University.

Artist Statement:

My father first put a camera in my hand when I was 10 years old, an act from which I've never recovered. I've been documenting the South for most of my life: its people, its landscape, its traditions, its surprising beauty and its maddening contradictions. Vernacular culture is born of poverty mixed with genius, and the South has plenty of both to spare. It is the pursuit, preservation and celebration of that culture that drives my own creativity.

I come from a family that regarded creativity as something as natural as breathing. My own personal expression found voice in my love of photography, discovering that I could engage in the world in real time, in ways that engaged my subconscious and made me feel alive and connected.

Since 2005, I have been pursuing the use of 19th Century collodion wetplate photography for my Southern documentary work, discovering that the patience required for the difficult fieldwork and long exposures bring out in the subjects a deeper essence. While those wetplate photos are cloaked in the visual artifice of an earlier time, I find that these tintypes and ambrotypes speak to themes that make the South unique, namely, connection to history, family, and the land. Or, as William Faulkner said, "The past isn't dead. It isn't even past."



Jimmy "Duck" Holmes, 2017, digital print from wetplate collodion tintype, 13" x 19"



2020 Florida Fellow Alba Triana

Miami, FL, sound artist Alba Triana (b. 1969, Bogota, Colombia), has showcased her hybrid artistic productions and installations in more than a dozen countries in Latin and North America and Europe. Among her solo exhibitions are recent ones at the Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín and Bogota's Teatro Colón in Colombia; the Mosquera Collection in Miami; and the ArtCenter/South Florida and Botanical Gardens, both in Miami Beach. Among recent group shows are the *Biennale Internationale des Arts Numériques* at Cénacore in Paris, France, and those at Oolite Arts in Miami and Colombia's 45 Salón Nacional de Artistas. Triana has received the prestigious Civitella Foundation Fellowship and commissions, residences and grants from world-class institutions and ensembles such as the Kronos Quartet, American Composers Forum, Oolite Arts in Miami Beach, ProHelvetia in Switzerland and GMEB in France. She holds a double MFA in music composition and integrated media from the California Institute of the Arts and did Ph.D. studies at the University of California, San Diego.

Artist Statement:

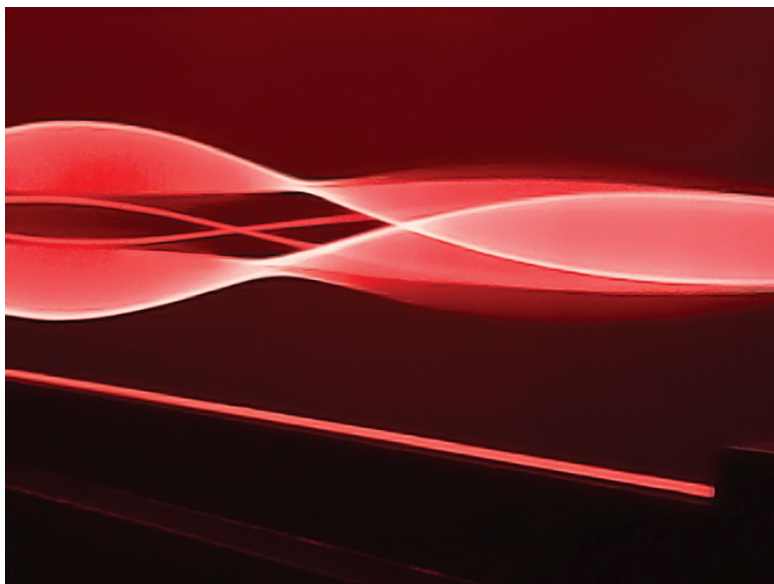
By promoting a meditative contemplation of nature at a micro, intangible level, my goal is to induce a state of awe, and a feeling of communion with an integrated wholeness that is active, interconnected and unified, provoking a profound identification with the essential elements that animate and connect us.

My work emerges from a deep interest in how nature intrinsically operates. Universal laws of chance, natural behaviors and phenomena, and fundamental modes of operation frame my approach to art/music making. This is why I engage creative methods that are holistic, complex and multidimensional. Thus, my oeuvre crosses the boundaries of a diverse set of fields.

My artistic production takes a variety of forms, including interactive musical installations, resonating spaces, sound and light sculptures and vibrational objects. These pieces, expressed in both space and time, are heard, walked through and seen.

Especially in the past 10 years, the fields of the sonic and the visual have become unified in my work. In that time, I have experimented with the properties and behaviors of different types of waves, and the resonance phenomena in acoustic spaces and physical bodies that emit sound and/or light.

As in the universe, these artworks tend to be self-generating and evolving. Statistics and probabilities are used to set the conditions that define the identity and functioning of different parameters in a work. This allows for an infinite amount of outcomes that can be determined and controlled.



Luminous Phrase, 2016–2019
(detail), visible and audible sound
installation, dimensions variable



Delirious Fields, 2019 (detail), suspended spheres in
electromagnetic fields, dimensions variable

Exhibition Checklist

Ashleigh Coleman

All works archival digital prints, 16" x 16"

His Own Haircut, 2018

Locked Out, 2018

Won't Take Them Off, 2018

Internal Dialogues, 2019

Kicked the Backdoor Barefoot, 2019

Not Again, 2019

Scooter Bike Skates, 2019

Seven Puzzles in Three Minutes, 2019

Tuesday Morning 2019

When She Kept Turning the Stove On, 2019

Carlton Nell

All works silver on film, 4" x 7"

Composition 295, 2019

Composition 296, 2019

Composition 298, 2019

Composition 299, 2019

Composition 300, 2020

Composition 301, 2020

Karen Ocker

Junco Partner, 2017, oil on metal framed with vintage jukebox shell, 12" x 12" x 5" (Collection of Al Abronski)

Tribute to Allen Toussaint, 2017, oil on rusted metal, fireplace surround and harmonium parts, 38" x 22" x 3" (Collection of Pam and Steve Hartnett)

Tribute to Amédée Ardoin, 2018, oil on birch plywood, reclaimed wood, antique accordion parts and frame, 17½" x 18" x 4½"

Zora Neale Hurston, 2018, oil, reclaimed cypress and card catalog parts, 11¾" x 8" (Collection of Aaron and Elizabeth Ahlquist)

Respect, 2018, oil on antique roof tin, 14" x 9" (Collection of Amy Laura Cahn)

Up above my head, 2019, oil on vintage tray, 14½" x 11¾"

Fahamu Pecou

Real NEGUS Don't Die: Child's Play (Tamir Rice), 2019, mixed media on paper, 33 ¼" x 25 ½"

Real NEGUS Don't Die: Let Them See (Emmet Till), 2019, mixed media on paper, 33 ¼" x 25 ½"

Real NEGUS Don't Die: Shining Prince (Malcolm X), 2019, mixed media on paper, 33 ¼" x 25 ½"

Black Skin White Masks, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 60" x 48"

Mules and Men, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 60" x 48"

Things Fall Apart, 2020, acrylic on canvas, 60" x 48"

Letitia Quesenberry

hyperspace 30, 2018, panel, lacquer, plexiglass, film, resin and LED, 34" diameter x 4"

hyperspace 35, 2018, panel, lacquer, plexiglass, film, resin and LED, 50" x 57" x 5"

BLSH 5, 2019, panel, lacquer, plexiglass, film and paint, 36" x 36" x 3"

BLSH 7, 2019, panel, lacquer, plexiglass, film and paint, 24 ½" diameter x 3 ¼"

BLSH 10, 2019, panel, lacquer, plexiglass, film and paint, 13 ¼" x 13 ¼" x 4"

as of yet, 2020, panel, polished plaster, graphite, mirror, glitter, film, paint, wax, plexiglass and resin, dimensions variable (individual components, 17" x 14" x 1" each)

Sherrill Roland

Jumpsuit Project, Edition 3/10, 2016–present, orange jumpsuit, orange duct tape and four photographs, dimensions variable

Weight(s), 2019, knit drawstring bag, shoestrings and exoneree trial transcripts, dimensions variable (bags 12" x 10" x 12" each)

October 2013, 2018, legal paper, Kool-Aid, Sharpie marker and steel, 12" x 24"

February 2014 Issue, 2018, ArtForum International February 2014 issue, toilet paper, primer paint, Kool-Aid, Sharpie marker and steel, 28" x 24"

Kristi Ryba

All works egg tempera and 22K gold leaf on panel

Chapel of Perpetual Adoration II, 2018, 18 ¾" x 45 ¾" (three panels, 18 ¾" x 15 ¼" each)

Massacre of the Innocents, 2018, 24" x 18" x 2"

Pope Sixtus IV, 2018, 40" x 36" x 2"

Disputation of St. Christine Blasey Ford, 2019, 36" x 24" x 2"

Right Hand of God Protecting the Faithful..., 2019, 40" x 30" x 2"

Three of Consanguinity, Kinship & Affinity, 2019, 40" x 30" x 2 ¾"

Bill Steber

All works digital print from wetplate collodion tintype, 13" x 19"

Cypress Grove, 2017

Dr. Charles Smith, 2017

Jeff Winston, 2017

Jimmy "Duck" Holmes, 2017

Thomas Jefferson Ross, 2017

Trenton Ayers, 2017

Alba Triana

Delirious Fields – Ensemble, 2019, suspended spheres in variable electromagnetic fields, dimensions variable

Luminous Phrase, 2018–2020, visible and audible sound installation, dimensions variable

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New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans,
Louisiana

Edward Hayes, Jr., The McNay Art Museum,
San Antonio, Texas

David Houston, Art Historian & Consultant,
New York, New York

Marilyn Zapf, Assistant Director and Curator,
Center for Craft, Asheville, North Carolina

2020 Southern Prize Juror Panel

Pradeep Dalal, Program Director, Creative Capital,
New York, New York

Grace Deveney, Associate Curator,
Prospect New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana

Jean W. McLaughlin, Artist & Consultant,
North Carolina

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The Bo Bartlett Center is one of the most unique cultural institutions in the country. Housed on the River Park campus of Columbus State University, the Center is a dynamic, creative learning laboratory that is part community center, part gallery/museum, and part of an experimental arts incubator. Based on the belief that art can change lives, the Center has a twofold mission: grassroots community outreach programs to the local public schools, disabled adults, the homeless and prisoners; and a national mission to partner with other institutions and collectors to provide innovative exhibitions and programming that deepens our understanding of art in America, both past and present through exhibitions, publications, and public programming.

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2019

Alabama - Jamey Grimes
Florida - Amy Gross**
Georgia - Bo Bartlett
Kentucky - Lori Larusso
Louisiana - Stephanie Patton
Mississippi - Rory Doyle*
North Carolina - Andrew Hayes
South Carolina - Virginia Scotchie
Tennessee - Andrew Scott Ross

2018

Alabama - Amy Pleasant
Florida - Anastasia Samoylova
Georgia - Paul Stephen Benjamin*
Kentucky - Garrett Hansen
Louisiana - Jeremiah Ariaz**
Mississippi - Dominic Lippillo
North Carolina - Meg Stein
South Carolina - Kate Hooray Osmond
Tennessee - Vesna Pavlovic

2017

Alabama - Pete Schulte
Florida - Noelle Mason*
Georgia - Masud Olufani
Kentucky - Becky Alley
Louisiana - Joey Slaughter
Mississippi - Coulter Fussell**
North Carolina - Stephanie J. Woods
South Carolina - Herb Parker
Tennessee - Georgann DeMille

* Southern Prize Winner

** Southern Prize Finalist

About South Arts

South Arts advances Southern vitality through the arts. The nonprofit regional arts organization was founded in 1975 to build on the South's unique heritage and enhance the public value of the arts. South Arts' work responds to the arts environment and cultural trends with a regional perspective. South Arts offers an annual portfolio of activities designed to support the success of artists and arts providers in the South, address the needs of Southern communities through impactful arts-based programs, and celebrate the excellence, innovation, value and power of the arts of the South. For more information, visit www.southarts.org.

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