

# DuMA Biennial

JUNE 26 – OCTOBER 31, 2021



# Welcome to the 2021 DuMA Biennial

This is our ninth DuMA Biennial. We are particularly grateful this year to be able to continue this tradition of celebrating regional contemporary art. When the call for entries opened in December 2020, we were still in the grips of the pandemic. Despite a glimmer of hope at that time as the first vaccinations were being administered, there was uncertainty whether artists would be willing or able to respond to the call. It was difficult to imagine hosting a large, group exhibition or, if it went forward, that it could look anything like it had in the previous eight iterations.

Fast forward to March 2021. When the call closed, numbers were lower than previous years. However, we were pleased that almost 190 artists had submitted over 600 works. With the extreme challenges over the last two years, every artist who submitted their work is to be commended. Their resilience and perseverance are deeply inspiring and appreciated.

Twenty-seven artists represented by 55 works of art make up the 2021 DuMA Biennial and, no, it doesn't look anything like previous Biennials. Except for the fact that they are always exhibitions of new work by regional artists, no two Biennials are ever the same. They are a reflection of their time and dependent on the work that is submitted and the juror's choices.

The criteria for entry and for selection are intentionally minimal. The main limitation for both artist and juror is the physical space of the museum. Otherwise, artists must be from our region and the work they submit must be made within the last two years. The juror can select whatever he or she wants from the submitted works. The 2021 DuMA Biennial Juror, Laura Burkhalter, curator at the Des Moines Art Center, has made an amazing selection this year. She has brought together a distinct yet cohesive group of voices sharing unique stories from across our region.

Thank you for being here. I hope that you find great enjoyment visiting the exhibition in person. I also invite you to visit the expanded experience on our website at [dbqart.org](http://dbqart.org). There you will find artist biographies, statements about the work, audio guides by the artists, and virtual studio tours.

*Stacy Gage Peterson, Curator and Registrar  
Dubuque Museum of Art*

Sponsored by



# Exhibiting Artists



**Tiberiu Chelcea**  
*Ames, Iowa*



**Wendi Dibbern**  
*Galena, Illinois*



**Jennifer Drinkwater**  
*Ames, Iowa*



**Linda Kelen**  
*Spring Green, Wisconsin*



**Alyssa Love**  
*Appleton, Wisconsin*



**Rachel Merrill**  
*Des Moines, Iowa*



**Daniel O'Brien**  
*Platteville, Wisconsin*



**Louise Pappageorge**  
*Chicago, Illinois*



**Lois Peterson**  
*Dakota, Minnesota*



**Megan Roethler**  
*Independence, Iowa*



**Vera Scekcic**  
*Racine, Wisconsin*



**Katie Schutte**  
*Platteville, Wisconsin*



**Ange Altenhofen**  
*Chariton, Iowa*



**Nikki Anderson**  
*Chicago, Illinois*



**Jill Birschbach**  
*Evanston, Illinois*



**Stina Henslee**  
*Dubuque, Iowa*



**Larassa Kabel**  
*Des Moines, Iowa*



**Louise Kames**  
*Dubuque, Iowa*



**Susan Metrican**  
*Fairfield, Iowa*



**Bill Mitchell**  
*Lancaster, Wisconsin*



**Natalie Murdock**  
*Chicago, Illinois*



**Nancy Purington**  
*Iowa City, Iowa*



**Elizabeth Read**  
*Cedar Rapids, Iowa*



**Catherine Reinhart**  
*Ames, Iowa*



**Gyan Shrosbree**  
*Fairfield, Iowa*



**Lauren Venable**  
*Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin*



**Brant Weiland**  
*Iowa City, Iowa*

# Checklist

Ange Altenhofen, *Hush (I remember how warm your skin used to be)* from the *Braille Series* and *Hide from the Braille Series*

Nikki Anderson, *Flora Dream 1* and *Flora Dream 2*

Jill Birschbach, *Pink Cross, Stilt, Yellow-Pink Arch*, and *Shedding Skin*

Tiberiu Chelcea, *Randomly Accessed Memory #4*, *Randomly Accessed Memory #15*, and *Randomly Accessed Memory #19*

Wendi Dibbern, *Resonant Exploration*, *Harmonic Den*, and *Quarry House*

Jennifer Drinkwater, *Homeland Insecurity (May 13, 2013: Part I)* and *Kate's Baby Bump Diary! (May 13, 2013: Part II)*

Stina Henslee, *For Fanny Cassidy*, *Matthew 10:16*, and *The Gum Analogy*

Larassa Kabel, *Black Crown of Recurring Loss Maquette*

Louise Kames, *I Don't See Anything That's Not Beautiful*, *The Veils*

Linda Kelen, *Swamp*, *Little Head*, *Pirate Island Moat*, and *the Delivery*

Alyssa Love, *Transgender Pride Flag*, *Plaid Mountain*, and *Light Slant*

Rachel Merrill, *Untitled (Trophy Wife)* and *Untitled (Creepier)*

Susan Metrican, *Kittens Are Like That* and *Power Swimmers (path)*

Bill Mitchell, *Four Letter Words #2* and *Greater Than Equal, Less Than Not Equal #2*

Natalie Murdock, *Frayed Ends* and *Chrysalis*

Daniel O'Brien, *Untitled*

Louise Pappageorge, *Cleopatra* and *Crone*

Lois Peterson, *Two Rivers* and *Above and Below*

Nancy Purington, *Comet Woman Sweeps the Night Sky* and *Comet Meteor Moon Viewing Vest*

Elizabeth Read, *Nesting I* and *Nesting II*

Catherine Reinhart, *The Mother Rubbings* and *E.V.R. 03.13.2020 | M.R.R 03.13.2020*

Megan Roethler, *So Close, So Far* and *Where's Daddy?*

Vera Scekic, *Untitled (twelve by ten plus three)* and *Peelback 2*

Katie Schutte, *Memory XI*

Gyan Shrosbree, *Upscale Casual*

Lauren Venable, *A Love Letter*

Brant Weiland, *Warped and Weft*

## JUROR'S STATEMENT - LAURA BURKHALTER



Even as I write this, I acknowledge we are all likely tired of being reminded how different 2020 was from any other year in recent memory. The desire to move on is strong. It would be irresponsible, however, to turn our backs on the way most lives changed in the last months, from the tragedy of personal loss to the trauma of social unrest, and the surreal nature of staying home for days and even weeks on end. Not all the art submitted for this exhibition dealt directly with recent events, and indeed not all the works selected do either, but very much of it did, in ways both blatant and subtle. My eyes as a curator were affected by my own experiences of 2020 and early 2021, and with that presence impossible to ignore in both art and exhibition planning, I decided to see and listen to how these works reflect our unique moment. That is, I think, the goal of any exhibition of contemporary art – to show a version of where we are right now.

As I went through each submission, I noticed artists seeking understanding of our times (and sometimes seeking refuge from them) in nature, gardens, and pets – as many of us non-artists have also done. I saw a real focus on materials, particularly things found around the house and then recycled or repurposed – just as many of us have taken up new crafts and baking or cleaned every room in the house to pass the time. I saw art examining vulnerability, mortality, and anxiety, and thought of our fears for the health of loved ones and the safety of those without the luxury of “staying home,” and the renewed focus on political injustice and social unrest that have shaken already tense times. It seemed simplistic at first, but the phrase “Looking out the windows and cleaning out the closet” became a sort of loose theme as I was constructing this exhibition, and the more I thought about it in the terms of the wonderful work submitted here, the more it seemed apt. This is not to suggest that the works here are not innovative in material, composition, and concept only if seen through the lens of 2020 to shine. But I do believe they are excellent representations of the here and now, and invention in a time of strife. Deliberate focus outside ourselves and deliberate looking in are the origins of inspiration and creativity. The art in this exhibition shows us the new in the familiar, and the familiar in places outside our particular corner of the world.

## ABOUT THE JUROR

A native of Des Moines and graduate of the University of Iowa in English and Art History, Burkhalter joined the Des Moines Art Center staff as Curatorial Assistant in 1999 and became Curatorial Manager in 2020. Burkhalter has organized several large group exhibitions of international contemporary art, including *Transparencies: Contemporary Art and a History of Glass*, *Laurel Nakadate: Strangers and Relations*, *Monument Valley*, and *Alchemy: Transformations in Gold*, which traveled to the Akron Museum of Art. She has been involved in the annual Iowa Artists exhibition nearly every year of her tenure, working to introduce the best of the state’s artists to the museum’s audience, and organizing solo exhibitions with Rachel Cox, Yun Shin, Mitchell Squire, and Jordan Weber. Working within the Des Moines Art Center collections, she has presented exhibitions on Yayoi Kusama, Andy Warhol, Henry Ossawa Tanner, and many others. Currently, she is planning a large solo exhibition with Las Vegas-based artist Justin Favela for 2021, as well as collection exhibitions on Francisco Goya and Claes Oldenburg. Laura lives in Des Moines with her partner, Marc, and their two cats Earl and Maple.