Artists Feature: Meek Hall’s graduating Bachelors of Fine Arts

It’s no secret the student enrolled with department of Art and Art History is a small percent in Ole Miss’s always expanding population. While the department is tiny, the students graduating with a BFA degree in the 2016 class is fierce. This spring Meek Hall will have nine students not only graduating, but presenting their senior thesis. These students, while from different walks of life, have embraced this expectation, allowing the opportunities that follow to be limitless. Learn more about the candidates!

**Thesis Exhibition #1 (Thesis: April 11 – April 15)**

Sarah Hammond, a 22 year old painting candidate from New Orleans, LA.

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? My style could be defined as a youthful overindulgence with mature flare added here and there. Oh and lots of sparkles.

What inspires you? My childhood and still very present inner child me inspire me most but my surroundings and life changes play prominent roles as well.

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? My favorite thing about paint is how versatile it is. I love how it can be so controlled one minute and then be loose and wild the next.

What are your plans after graduation? My plans are to continue on to graduate school and continue to work and improve as much as I can.

What is your biggest art-world pet peeve? My biggest art-Everyone that feels entitled to tell you what kind of work you should be making. Art is supposed to be individualized and self-expressive, and it loses that charm when other people start controlling what you do.

Heidi Bain , a 24 year old graphic design candidate from Orlando, Florida.

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? I would define my style as feminine, classic, and whimsical.

What inspires you? I'm very inspired by creating artwork that can add positivity and happiness to other people's lives. I also take a lot of inspiration from where I grew up in Orlando, Florida being surrounded by loads of creativity and innovative design at Walt Disney World.

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? My favorite thing about Graphic Design is how incredibly broad of a medium it is. I am always learning new things every single day! It is a medium that is constantly changing and growing, and keeping up with the challenge is sometimes scary but mostly very exciting.

What are your plans after graduation? After graduation I plan to move back to Orlando and pursue a career with Disney in the field of Graphic Design.

Is their piece you've made at ole miss you are most proud of? Why? A project I'm proud of from my time at Ole Miss is packaging that I designed for an orange juice brand. It was my first time trying out packaging design and I never realized how much fun I could have with it! It was definitely a project that influenced my style as a designer.

Alice Connelly, a 24 year old Painting candidate from Austin, TX.

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? Contemporary Realism.

What inspires you? Seeing first hand artists’ work that I admire. Traveling to unfamiliar places. Music and movies.

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? Oil painting is layered and textured by strokes that are your own - the medium dries slowly and allows colors to be blended over time.

What are your plans after graduation? Graduate school! Where's your favorite unconventional place to see art? Marfa,Texas where Donald Judd's work and other collections are housed in a mildly refurbished WWII concentration camp in in the middle of nowhere - the barren desert is the perfect backdrop for their minimalism.

**Thesis Exhibition #2 (April 18 – April 22)**

Hunter Johnson, a 22 year old Painting candidate from Batesville, MS.

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? My lightboxes are a collaboration between minimalism and classic portraiture. My paintings are close to impressionism.

What inspires you? The sky is a huge one! I love the colors of the sky and the way the light changes depending on the time of day/weather. I'm also inspired by books I read and people I meet.

What is your favorite thing about your chosen medium? I'm working with lightboxes right now. I like the precision involved in my process, and I like the way all of the pieces come together in the end to make a product I'm proud of.

What are your post grad plans? Work until I have enough money to move to Colorado. Get back into making comics.

How do you when your piece is finished? When the deadline is up!

Paige Shryock, a 22 year old Imaging Arts candidate from West River, MD

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? Surreal photography with some journaling references, emotional in a good way!

What inspires you? Domestic relationships, personal stories and journeys, what people don't show to the world and what makes an individual person.

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? Photography is misleading in the fact we are taught to think a photograph doesn't lie, I love to photograph realistic scenes and then edit in something that makes the audience question what reality is.

What are your plans after graduation? Find a good job that is fulfilling until I’m ready to go to graduate school. Eventually teach advance placement photography in high school or college level. Continue creating my own work.

What is the most unusual thing you've done in your art? I did a photoshoot with Papa Johns buffalo sauce on my face. My skin burned for a good 4 hours but the teacher loved it.

Sarah Adzick, a 23 year old ceramics candidate from St. Louis, Missouri.

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? My style can always be changing but right now I like to focus on the ideas of comfort, beauty and elegance throughout my artwork.

What inspires you? I think my inspirations are based off what I am surrounded by and what is shown to me. Different things and people inspire me every day.

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? Clay is forgiving and somewhat therapeutic. I love that I can create art that people can interact with and use on a daily basis.

What are your plans after graduation? I would love to become a teacher and teach art, but really just continue making pots and getting my hands in clay

If you could spend a week anywhere in the world studying art, where would it be?

**Thesis Exhibition #3 (April 25 – April 29)**

Avery Cordray, a 23 year old Painting candidate from Houston, TX

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? Unique personal perceptions of the world in abstract ways

What inspires you? I am inspired by the current and constant creation of ways artists visualize their worlds.

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? I enjoy oil paint more than any other type of paint or art form due to the amount of variation of color you can get from mixing the oil paints and them not drying before you can change them as with acrylic paints.

What are your plans after graduation? I plan on going to a graduate program or working for a gallery hopefully.

What under-appreciated artist, gallery, or work do you think people should know about? I think the Cy Twombley Museum in Houston, Texas is heaven on earth and everyone on this planet should live there or at least go see it in person. The scales of the pieces are majestic and awe inspiring.

Taylor Mauer, a 24 year old Ceramics candidate from Rome, GA

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? Comfortable

What inspires you? Mississippi and Family

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? I love that I can make a piece of art that someone can use every day. Function is very important to my work.

What are your plans after graduation? I want to do a ceramic residency

If you weren’t doing what you do today, what other job would you have? Teaching

Camille Hunt, a 23 year old painting candidate from Mobile, AL.

How would you define your style in one sentence or less? My style? Oh gosh. It’s always developing, but I have always favored realism and female figures.

What inspires you? I could write a novel for you. An artist that inspires me would be John Singer Sargent because of how he can unify gestural strokes and detailed stokes in his portraits. I also love Alyssa Monks work because of the emotion so many of her paintings portray. My all-time favorite photographer would be Sally Mann. Outside of artist I'm Inspired by people of all walks of life, People who don't hold back on who they are and people who refrain from a category or group and have their own identity and style.

What is your favorite thing about working with your chosen medium? My favorite thing about oils is that it stays wet for long periods of time so if you make a mistake you can always scrape it off and start again.

What are your plans after graduation? I'd like to travel for a while. I’m currently trying AuPair for a family in Italy.

What’s the one thing you want to accomplish as an artist before you die? I do not have one particular thing I'd like to accomplish. I just think it is important to always have a goal in art and to always work your hardest on mastering it. I'll die happy knowing I’ve worked hard. My current goal is figuring out ways to push more emotion into my paintings through paint.