

Visual Arts - Rachelle B. Pablo

Serving as a juror for the 2024 Utah Artist Fellowship comes with great responsibility to the Utah community. Reviewing the many submissions and narrowing the selection to five artists was a complex process as I immersed myself in the creative world of many talented artists. The selected creatives possess talent, discipline, and distinct conceptual methodologies observed from initial stage to finished work. My selection process considers the artist's range of skills, artistic ability, and effectiveness in their statements. Furthermore, their intellectual and creative labor and artistic passion.

Alexandra Fuller is a Utah-born artist accomplished in photography and documentary films. Her superior work results from a distinct vision. Fuller writes that her labor-intensive approach of hiking into Utah's rugged terrain reveals an "inextricable relationship between resilient people and places on the edge, as well as the changing nature of both." Fuller effectively captures fleeting moments of time, material, and story. This grant will assist in uncovering the next chapter of Fuller's exploration.

Meaghan Gates is an assistant professor of ceramics at Utah Tech University. According to Gates, her work "captures moments of both beauty and the grotesque through precarious moments of change." Her ceramics are a convergence of biomorphic forms in an in-between layered state of process. Gates' transformative intent in each sculpture entails multi-glazing; the combination of color and surface texture results in a skin-like aesthetic, inducing a living presence in each piece. Gates' work activates a perception of aliveness and evolution that confirms the impermanent fragility of nature.

Byron Ramos is a sculptor and a first-generation Mexican-Guatemalan American. As a veteran of the Army Special Forces, his military journey impacts his perspective on art, religion, and philosophy. Ramos's artistic endeavor originated with neo-urban photography, shifting mediums to stone sculptures, and found objects. His stone carvings reflect the unforgiving process of the veteran experience. Yet, the artistic process inspires Ramos to create a healing space for veterans' voices through the arts.

Holly Rios is a printmaker with an MFA from the University of Utah. She pushes the boundaries of society's misplaced interpretation of femininity using monsters as metaphors in response to the male gaze. She explains, "I found solace in a third category of representation—not victim, not villain, but monster." In her distinct body of work, Rios flexes her agency by addressing harsh topics and successfully reframing perceptions of femininity while challenging the lens of toxic masculinity.

Dana Worley is a self-taught glass artist who explores various methods, from stained to fused glass, while multi-layering numerous materials that generate complex textures. She resides in the foothills of northern Utah, where the landscapes of texture, light, and color inform her work. Lastly, Worley seeks to capture the essence of influence rather than a literal translation of the delicate nature of glass.