I'M THINKING ABOUT THAT MOMENT

when the Fine Arts undergraduate end-of-course show is installed, but the public has not yet seen it, at 8.45 am on the day of the final assessment. Similar to the moment before a party begins, display is paramount. People have been up till 2:00 am the night before, with hot-glue guns and masking tape, with plastic bags of installation bits and bobs.

This is the end of the degree, the work is made (or not), the mission fulfilled or overstepped into new territories. There is a quiet in the studio. The years, months, hours and minutes of cacophony and struggle are over. At this point the student artists can relax, recover, decompress, unwind and let go. And this moment is groundbreaking because it is the first time these young artists experience that feeling: The show's finished—now what?

Let’s hold onto that thought, that moment before consumption, judgment, assessment and re-engagement. It’s the artist’s moment to breathe. The post-partum moment. This moment of art school graduation is defining. A student artist’s work can provide a litmus test of future possibilities for the culture—an oracular moment, a fortune teller’s prophecy that frustratingly we can barely yet grasp. Artists, like poets, run across ideas and thoughts long before others do. This show is the closest thing we have to an uncensored, unbranded, unpackaged, unmuzzled voice of contemporary art.

This much is clear. Students graduating now are no longer kowtowing to existing dominant art systems because everything is up for grabs. The Clement Greenberg world, Warhol’s death, the Culture Wars of the 1980s, and the post-pluralism of recent times are over. All earlier paradigms are rendered redundant in a new, globalized, digitized art world.

A new breed of artists is responsible for reshaping the terms of curatorial and artistic engagement. As witnessed in the Berlin and British art scenes, a generation of artist-culture-preneurs emerged since the 1990s who have hijacked the traditional gallery pyramid system, leapfrogging their way to collectors and auction houses, sidestepping the gallery/critic gate-keeper channels. Rather than becoming victims of an overloaded art market or delinquent curators, younger artists are aware of sharper strategies, spurred by a system where they find themselves playing on an uneven field, performing on a new stage where the proscenium has moved.

Let us stay with that moment where the fine arts undergraduate final exhibition is installed but not yet viewed. It is waiting in the early light of the assessment day. We witness a moment of latency, immanence and divine possibility. Read these signs of art, the double-coded stuttering of new languages, idioms and cartographies. They are the stammering glyphs of vocabularies and aesthetic revolutions yet to come.

In this year’s 20/20 catalog we witness some of these new tendencies and their mutant marriages. Much of this year’s exhibition features a renewed concern with the natural world: context-driven installation, and complex, post-digital fourth-dimensional environments. The work ranges from the diaristic to an interest in deep architectural space. There is a new fascination with the uncanny object and the viral, as well as a return to the body and blood using computer software, through bio art, documented video performance and fragmentary new cinematic languages. In painting, there is an engagement with abstraction’s reconstitution, and with memories of past, aberrant, archaic and outmoded political systems of the Cold War.

What is clearly discernible about younger artists working in the post-Koons era is that they are moving away from 1990s Grand Guignol gestures, and from first-wave Po-Mo finish fetish. The new
generation is returning to an economy of means, to subtle strategies. Their works are created for slow release. They are less heavy-handed and more cryptic.

Some works in the show engage with visual density and physical structures refracted through emerging digital means. Others concern the morph, the disembodied machine-life and the mutant prosthetic amoeboid form bursting out of the laboratory. There is a return to poetics and the ephemeral, the fragmentary and fragile. This is not the short-lived, 1990s NYC “abject art” movement. This new iteration possesses delicacy, hybridity and a lightness of gesture, shot through with a fragility, decisiveness and permanence.

Several works in this catalog illustrate this deftness of hand, showing a re-engagement with installation and conceptual forms, but using contemporary tropes (dry ice, fiber optics, fluorescent materials), with a light, playful—but decisive—hand and eye. They hypnotize us with optical soccer, the day-glo, the plastic, the synthetic real. This play constitutes an interrogation of the “real” in the era of the virtual.

There is above all in this year’s graduating show a tremendous quickness and facility with form, and guile-free montaging which juxtaposes genres and movements into seamless new hybrid forms. Personal visions are carved out, rinsed and re-pasted into art for the new media age.

Take a close look at this early morning moment, watch closely now. These new languages are readable if you look carefully.
ALESSIA RESTA

INSTALLATION VIEW, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: #left behind, 24 x 129 x .5", neon lighting, enamel, wood, 2013; The Starfish House, 5' x 2.5' x 2', wood, neon lighting, glass, live starfish, rock, sand, fluval filtration, heater, 2013; Regenerated, 8 x 10 x 2" ea., rapid proto type plaster, enamel, 2013.
The Starfish House (detail), 5 x 2.5 x 2", wood, neon lighting, glass, live starfish, rock, sand, fluval filtration, heater, 2013
Regeneration, 64 x 24 x 24", plywood, 2013
TOP INSTALLATION VIEW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Canvas rubbing 1, 4 x 6', mixed media, 2012; Graphite on wall, 4 x 3', mixed media, 2012; FC1, FC2, FC3, 5 x 5' ea., mixed media, 2012; untitled, 2 x 3', mixed media, 2012

BOTTOM INSTALLATION VIEW: phases, one and two, metal frame 2 x 5', drawing 3 x 5', drywall, house paint, wood, welded metal rods, paper, black ink, tape, 2013
RIGHT: upon a time, dimensions variable, photos, stucco, 2013

LEFT: not yet/already over, 5 x 8 x 54", edition of 3, egg carton, cement, empty eggs, wood, 2013
*Untitled #27*, dimensions variable, bubble wrap, wood, neon light, paper, contact paper, colour samples, canvas, 2013
Untitled, dimensions variable, wood, plants, bricks, colour samples, canvas, plastic, 2013
LEFT & RIGHT: Shrine (selection of stills), 4 x 6” ea., 250 postcards, C-prints, 2013
TOP: *installation view*, 54 x 96” ea., ink jet, oil on canvas, 2013

BOTTOM: *installation view*, dimensions variable, 250 postcards, C-prints, mp4 video, 2013
Morning, 54 x 96", ink jet, oil on canvas, 2013
Ladder, 1' x 1' x 66', wax, human hair, 2013
LEFT: Paper Stack, 8 x 11.5 x 40", ceramic, 2013
RIGHT: What's the Difference, 5 x 5 x 5", paper, thread, 2013
installation view, dimensions variable, paper, thread. 2013
LEFT: Juice on the Loose, 29 x 42.5”, neon, 2013

RIGHT: Baring Borscht, dimensions variable, glass, sugar, paint, 2013
Sharing Sugar, 77 x 117 x 93”, Aqua-Resin, foam, silicone, steel, sugar, paint, 2013
A disposable face mask, 6 x 10 x 1.5\textquoteleft, leather, 2013
LEFT: *Untitled*, 7 x 10 x 4”, multimedia (meat, leather, plastic tray), 2013

RIGHT: *Bag I*, 9 x 11 x 3”, meat, 2013
LEFT: Untitled An egg tray, 4.5 x 6 x 2.3", multi media (leather and egg shell), 2013
RIGHT: Untitled Things that I Threw out, dimensions variable, leather, 2013
Silent Shout, dimensions variable, multimedia (wood, glass jar, meat, ice), 2013
LEFT: Virtuality #3, dimensions variable, acrylic board, wood structure, fluorescent light, 2013
RIGHT: Virtuality #2, dimensions variable, acrylic board, wood structure, fluorescent light, 2013
LEFT: Virtuality #4, dimensions variable, wood structure, fluorescent light, 2013
RIGHT: Virtuality #2, dimensions variable, acrylic board, wood structure, fluorescent light, 2013
LEFT: Infinity as Dots - Black, 29 x 44”, digital photograph, 2012
RIGHT: Infinity as Dots - White, 29 x 44”, digital photograph, 2012
Child Play - Children Running, 01:23 min, video, 2012
LEFT: Stereoscope (installation detail), dimensions variable, vintage stereoscope, 2013

RIGHT: The Shift, 18 x 24”, graphite on paper, 2012
LEFT: Stereoscope (drawing and installation), 18 x 24", installation dimensions variable, graphite on paper, poplar floor and panelling, 2012

RIGHT: Stereoscope (drawing and installation view), dimensions variable, graphite on paper, poplar floor and panelling, 2013
Untitled (Spring Installation), dimensions variable, mixed media, 2013
LEFT: El Greco, birchwood, oil, acrylic, 2013

RIGHT: Voyeur, oil and acrylic on wood panel, wooden frames, 2013
LEFT: *Untitled*, dimensions variable, drywall, wood, thermostat, fire alarm, electric outlet, 2013

RIGHT: *Three Sixty Eight*, dimensions variable, silicon, wood, inkjet print, 2012
MICHAEL MADDEN
Microcosm Sculpture Series and Cosm Series (installation view), dimensions variable, glass jars, live rock, salt water, various life forms, archival inkjet print, 2012
LEFT: Microcosm Sculpture Series, dimensions and durations variable, glass jars, live rock, salt water, various life forms, 2012

RIGHT: Untitled - Sun, 1' x 10' x 1.5', charged, neon-infused blown glass brick, blown glass terrarium brick, soil, stones, moss, ferns, 2012
LEFT: *Untitled*, dimensions and durations variable, video, LCD flat screen monitors, 2012

RIGHT: *Untitled - Wind*, 1.5' x 3' x 10", plexiglass, in-line duct fan, branch, RC LED ribbon light, 2012
LEFT: Installation view #1, dimensions variable, mixed media, 2013
RIGHT: Installation view #2, dimensions variable, mixed media, 2013
LEFT: Untitled, dimensions variable, oil on wood, 2013

RIGHT: Untitled, Installation view #3, dimensions variable, oil on canvas, 2013
LEFT: Between us, monitor size: 67.7 x 46.9 x 14.9', single channel video projected on monitor, 50 second (loop), 2013

RIGHT: Between us, dimensions variable, wood/ fabric and two channel video, 2013
LEFT: Between us, dimensions variable, wood, fabric and two channel video, 2013

RIGHT: Between us (detail), dimensions variable, wood, fabric and two channel video, 2013
LEFT: *Enriched wheat* (detail), dimensions variable, mixed media, 2013

RIGHT: *Sober mimicry*, dimensions variable, mixed media, 2012
LEFT: *Enriched wheat*, dimensions variable, mixed media, 2013

RIGHT: *Shallow work and deep pleasure*, dimensions variable, mixed media, 2012
LEFT AND RIGHT: Body of Light (Anamorphism), dimensions variable, performative/installation, video, projector, speakers, reflective plastics, 2013
LEFT AND RIGHT: *Body of Light (Anamorphism)*, dimensions variable, performative/installation, video, projector, speakers, reflective plastics, 2013
LEFT: Installation view, 2013

RIGHT: Red Eye, 62 x 44", ink jet print, 2013
LEFT: Untitled, 65 x 44", ink jet print, 2013
RIGHT: Untitled, 27 x 17", ink jet print, 2013
Traveling, 30 x 75 x 28", mixed media, 2012
LEFT AND RIGHT: A Collection of irregularity, dimensions variable, mixed media, 2013
LEFT: A Collection of Irregularity - study (installation detail), dimensions variable, pen, pencil on paper, clay, 2013

RIGHT: A Collection of Irregularity (detail), dimensions variable, mixed media, 2013
LEFT: My Little Red Prank #5: Welcome Home, 1.5 x 8 x 5m, sculpture, installation, mixed media, 2012

RIGHT: Self Portrait, 5 x 8 x 5m, laser print, red yarn, video, 2013
LEFT: Self Portrait, 5 x 8 x 5m, laser print, red yarn, video, 2013

RIGHT: Self Portrait (detail), 5 x 8 x 5m, laser print, red yarn, video, 2013
CHAIR’S CHOICES
Untitled (Close to the edge of the myth), oil on canvas, 2013
Untitled (Close to the edge of the myth) II, oil on canvas, 2013
WYATT MILLS
LEFT: Untitled, oil on canvas, 2013
RIGHT: Self Portrait, 36 x 94", oil on door, 2013
LEFT: Girl Painting Herself, 38 x 42", oil on canvas, 2013

RIGHT: The Necessities, The Ordinariness, and The Dream, 36 x 60", oil on canvas, 2013