

# DAVIS WEEKLY WEBINARS



## Working with Contemporary Art: Artists Notes

### IMAGINE (Sneha Shrestha)

*SchoolArts*: February 2020

- Boston-based artist born in Kathmandu, Nepal
- First street artist to combine Sanskrit calligraphy with graffiti lettering
- After attending Gettysburg College, was mentored by Boston street artist “Pro-Blak” who introduced her to hip-hop culture and graffiti art
- Active in Artists for Humanity, a group encouraging teens to tap into their artistic potential in Nepal
- Paintings and street art often quote Nepalese poetry with positive messages

### Daniel Minter

*SchoolArts*: February 2019

- Art weaves together reconstruction of personal history and themes of historical events that reflect on the experiences of African Americans
- Combines mystical and esoteric symbols of Africa, African Americans during slavery, and images of everyday working people
- Born in southern Georgia and graduated from Art Institute of Atlanta with graphic design degree
- Trip to Brazil in the early 1990s made him realize the universal nature of the African experience in the West
- Incorporates Afro-Caribbean symbols in his work such as okra, cotton, and brooms
- Settled in Portland, Maine and became involved in Black Artist Forum which nurtures young artists of color
- Instructor at Maine College of Art
- Has illustrated eleven children’s books, including one about Sojourner Truth

### Lauren Clay

*SchoolArts*: April 2020

- Grew up in suburbs of Atlanta, now lives and works in Brooklyn.
- BFA from Savannah College and MFA in painting from Virginia Commonwealth University
- Best known for large-scale installations of marbled and illusionistic architectural wallpaper combined with plaster/paper pulp painted sculptures
- Influenced by her Southern Baptist upbringing, her illusionistic architectural images explore the idea of undefined “otherness” of the spiritual nirvana everyone seeks
- Early work was illusionistic paintings of architecture on large sheets of paper, now executed at giant scale in the form of digitally printed wallpaper
- Paintings and sculptures are Clay’s attempt to subvert the traditional “masculine” associations with architecture and sculpture of monumental scale

### Jennifer Vinegar Avery

*SchoolArts*: April 2019

- Installation/performance artist who constructs elaborate sets that are akin to three-dimensional still life—calls her work “DIY Witchcraft”
- As a young person, staged elaborate shabby-chic productions based on cartoons and romance novels
- Graduate of Brown University
- Performances are now historically well-informed, based on traditional fairy tales or mythology
- Performances present evolving perceptions of gender roles, aging, and identity; often act as vehicle for personal narrative couched in elaborate costumes
- First American artist elected Artist in Residence for the Hermès Foundation in Paris where she designed and produced 300 performance costumes and objects from the house’s luxury fabrics (*Beast Boutique*, 2014–2018)



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### Jannick Deslauriers

*SchoolArts*: March 2020

- Creates life-sized replicas of cars, trucks, tanks, and building façades in delicately stitched, translucent fabrics
- Born in Joliette, Quebec and graduated from University of Montreal (2008)
- While studying art, realized that it allowed her to explore the concept of the collective conscience
- Attributes her disintegrating forms to artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Anselm Kiefer, and Mona Hatoum
- Began exploring translucent materials after discovering she could sew aluminum mesh. The use of thick black thread outlines the forms creating three-dimensional “drawings”
- Her sculptures, often based on multiple images of cars damaged by roadside bombs in Iraq and Afghanistan, are cautionary calls against war, the destruction of Earth’s biosphere, and the decay of decent society

### Angela Alés

*SchoolArts*: February 2018

- As a child in Colombia, her grandfather introduced her to painting
- Her grandmother was her first mentor, teaching her about religion, the spirit world, and storytelling
- Attended the Visual Arts high school, New World Center for the Arts in Miami. While there painting—especially the human figure—became a spiritual as well as an aesthetic experience
- Earned her degree in 1984 from the Cooper Union for Advancement of Science and Art in New York, and an MFA from the Miami International University of Art and Design
- A major influence of her mature painting style was a sketchbook she developed at age 14. In the sketches, she began to blend physically real imagery with the spiritual—corporeal realism such as bleeding organs, with visions of spiritual darkness and light
- Her visual language is what she ultimately declares a strongly Surrealistic style
- Work is grounded in the physicality of the smooth, ovoid, almond-eyed faces seen in the ancient Colombian Muisca (flourished 1000–1500s CE) sculpture, and Christian subject matter gleaned from her grandmother

### Yung Jake

*SchoolArts*: April 2017

- Video music artist, rapper, painter, and conceptual artist
- Creates digital portraits of celebrities composed of emojis using Emoji.ink, an app developed by partner Vince McKelvie, an experimental artist who works in computer-generated animation, including GIF loops and real-time interactive multimedia
- Emojis that compose portraits are linked to personality/interests/profession of subject and are based on photographs
- Creates graffiti-informed fine art paintings of abstracted water bottle shapes printed in UV-cured ink on Dibond, an aluminum composite sheet (ACS)

### Emily Sandagata

*SchoolArts*: September 2019

- Her work, combinations of sculpture, painting, and found objects, reflects the demolition of the late 1900s modernist “canon” that emphasized art that was devoid of personal reflection, gesture, or story.
- Mixed-media works that combine two-dimensional and three-dimensional elements have an affinity to the found-object works of Surrealist Kurt Schwitters, and the spiritual intensity of the assemblages of American Surrealist Joseph Cornell
- Credits her upbringing in rural Massachusetts with the appreciation of found objects, both natural and otherwise
- Works intuitively without a plan for the finished works. Channels personal experiences and ideas about class, decay, and life cycles.

### Veronica Fish

*SchoolArts*: May 2019

- Artist, illustrator, and comic artist whose work reflects a more sympathetic depiction of everyday humanity rather than clichéd stereotypes
- Her work with such comics as the re-envisioned *Archie* and *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* are evidence of the major role women currently play in comic book and graphic novel production
- Initially interested in animation but opted for comic art because it was more tied to illustration and film, both influences on her mature style
- Honed her drawing and painting skills initially with illustration jobs for various magazines
- Self-published graphic novel *Pirates of Mars*
- Has illustrated for several Marvel titles, and for Dark Horse Comics