

Izzy Dunn

Thesis Deliverables

Thesis Committee: Dr. Meena Selvakumar, Kascha Semonovitch, Katie Buckingham

DECAY

INDEX

-	Introduction	pg. 2
-	Evaluation Survey	pg. 3
○	Survey Poster	pg. 3
○	Results	pg. 4
○	Synthesized Data	pg. 20
-	Call for Work	pg. 25
○	Description Text	pg. 25
○	Submission Rubric and Notes	pg. 26
-	List of Artists and Included Work	pg. 48
-	Assets	pg. 51
-	Layout	pg. 54
-	Exhibition Text	pg. 56
-	Images	pg. 58

INTRODUCTION

For this project, I worked with The Vestibule, a contemporary art gallery that showcases 3D and installation art in Ballard, Seattle, WA.

The purpose of this project was to curate an exhibition that would bring new visitors to the gallery, expand the gallery's current point of view, and finally encourage new appreciation for contemporary art. I wanted to create a show that included works that were very conceptual and potentially complicated, but frame the exhibition so as to demystify the work and make it less intimidating for inexperienced viewers.

PROCESS

This project took place between fall of 2025 and spring of 2026. It began with planning the theme, where I brought four rough ideas to Kascha, and we decided on one, Decay, for the show. I wrote a description and Kascha put the call up on the Vestibule's website. In addition, I sent the call to several artist collectives and the art departments at several local universities, and both I and Kascha sent the call to specific artists. The call was open for one month, and while it was ongoing I performed a small evaluation study with people at local farmer's markets to gauge people's experiences with contemporary art. Once the call was closed, Kascha and I separately made notes and ranked each submission based on a rubric and then met to discuss who would be in the show. Once I had chosen the works for the show and Kascha had approved, I created a 3D model of the gallery and began to plan a layout for the show. I used the model to create a narrative for the show: the process of decay as a positive force for change within a person. I created four sections to tell this story, moving from Breaking Down to Seeing in New Ways to Changing States to Creating Space for Reflection. Once I had outlined the narrative, I wrote the curatorial statement, wall text for each section, and created a curatorial reflection with my thought processes on each section and questions for further thought. The show took place in April of 2026. The week before, I was on-site at the gallery helping to coordinate artists installing their work and hanging pieces. The Vestibule hosted an opening reception on the first day of the show, and on the last day I did a curatorial walk-through of the exhibition and facilitated an artist panel with two artists included in the show. Finally, I helped with deinstalling the show and packing up work that needed to be shipped back to the artist.

TIMELINE

Proposed Timeline

September 2025: Present and decide on theme ideas.

November/December 2025: Send out open call.

December 2025: Gather evaluation data.

December 2025/ Early January 2026: Select artists and works, provide images for press.

February 2026: Finalize show layout, write text.

March 2026: Final Details.

April 2026: Show is on display at the Vestibule.

Actual Timeline

September 2025: Present and decide on theme ideas.

December 2025: Began gathering data.

End of December 2025: Sent out open call.

January 2026: Finished gathering data, selected artists and work (end of January).

February/March 2026: Finalized show layout, wrote text.

April 2026: Show is on display at the Vestibule.

EVALUATION SURVEY

In order to collect data for this project, I surveyed 39 people at the Ballard and Capitol Hill farmer's markets to learn about people's experience of contemporary art. I wanted to use this data to inform how I wrote the text that would be incorporated into the show, so that I could try to alleviate some of the misconceptions about contemporary art and create a more rewarding experience for the viewer.

Overall, I think that some of the questions in my survey were more successful than others. For example, I think that I got valuable information by asking people what helps them look at a piece of art for longer, what adjectives they associate with their experiences of contemporary art, and whether they agree or disagree with a series of statements. I think that some of the questions that I asked either didn't give me any useful information or were perhaps worded in a way that made them confusing or less specific than would have been ideal.

SURVEY POSTER

GOT A MINUTE?

answer some questions for my thesis!

about me and my project
Hello! My name is Izzy and I'm a Master's of Museum Studies student at the University of Washington, designing an exhibition for the Vestibule gallery on the theme of Decay for my thesis project. As a new curator, I'm especially interested in mid-century and contemporary abstract art, and I'm collecting data on how people engage with this genre. If you'd like to see some of my work, this QR code will take you to a virtual exhibition that I curated this year (2025) titled, *Phantasm: Spirituality & Abstraction*.



see my exhibition!

about the Vestibule
The Vestibule is an artist-forward exhibition space in the Ballard neighborhood of Seattle. We frequently showcase 3d projects and noncommercial installations. We work closely with artists in collaborative exhibitions, and we invite artists as guest curators. We support the sale of artworks on a low, sliding scale for commission and do not exclusively represent artists.



more about the gallery

THANK YOU!



scan here for the survey!

[] the vestibule

RESULTS

	Participant #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	How old are you?	25–34	18–24	35–44	18–24	45–54	25–34	18–24	55–64	25–34	18–24
	What gender do you identify as?	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Non-binary	Female	Male	Female	Male
	Where in Seattle do you live?	Ballard	Capitol Hill	Ballard	Fremont	Ballard	Queen Anne	Ballard	Green Lake	Capitol Hill	Ballard
	How often do you visit art galleries and art museums?	Monthly	Every 6 months	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly	Every few years	Monthly	Every 6 months	Monthly	Yearly
	If you don't often visit art galleries or art museums, why not?		I don't have time	Too expensive			Too expensive		I don't have time		Too expensive

	How long do you typically spend looking at one piece of art in a museum or gallery?	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds	Between 30 seconds and 1 minute	Less than 10 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds	Between 30 seconds and 1 minute
	What helps you look at a piece for longer? Pick as many as you like.	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, With someone who can guide the experience	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean, With someone else	Read the text for context, With someone who can guide the experience	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean, With someone who can guide the experience
	What are 3 adjectives that describe your experience	confusing, exciting, bold	inspiring, challenging, vibrant	overwhelming, thought-provoking, intense	confusing, abstract, intriguing	confusing, frustrating, mysterious	interesting, stimulating, different	provocative, unsettling, meaningful	inspiring, expressive, bold	confusing, chaotic, energetic	reflective, emotional, powerful

	of contempora ry art?										
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	I feel like I understand contempora ry art.	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral
	I can get meaning from contempora ry art.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
	I find contempora ry art intimidating.	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Neutral
	Contempora ry art is too complex to understand without an art degree.	Agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Neutral

	Contemporary art doesn't mean anything.	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral
	Art should always be beautiful.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Art should always have a concrete meaning.	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

	Participant #	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	How old are you?	65+	35–44	25–34	18–24	45–54	18–24	25–34	35–44	Under 18	25–34
	What gender do you identify as?	Female	Female	Male	Female	Prefer not to say	Male	Female	Male	Non-binary	Male
	Where in Seattle do you live?	Wallingford	Capitol Hill	Ballard	Capitol Hill	Queen Anne	Capitol Hill	Fremont	Capitol Hill	Capitol Hill	Belltown
	How often do you visit art galleries and art museums?	Weekly	Monthly	Every 6 months	Yearly	Monthly	Every few years	Monthly	Every 6 months	Monthly	Yearly
	If you don't often visit art galleries or art museums, why not?			I don't have time	Too expensive		I'm not interested in art		I don't have time		Too expensive

	How long do you typically spend looking at one piece of art in a museum or gallery?	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 30 seconds and 1 minute	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 2 and 5 minutes	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds
	What helps you look at a piece for longer? Pick as many as you like.	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, With someone who can guide the experience	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean, With someone else	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, With someone who can guide the experience	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean, With someone who can guide the experience
	What are 3 adjectives that describe your experience	innovative, bold, complex	confusing, dull, unclear	intriguing, diverse, inspiring	Neutral	abstract, layered, intense	confusing, intimidating, distant	thought-provoking, engaging, confusing	exciting, experimental, dynamic	creative, inspiring, unexpected	intense, meaningful, emotional

	of contempora ry art?										
Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	I feel like I understand contempora ry art.	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree	Neutral
	I can get meaning from contempora ry art.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
	I find contempora ry art intimidating.	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Agree	Neutral
	Contempora ry art is too complex to understand without an art degree.	Strongly agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Neutral

	Contemporary art doesn't mean anything.	Neutral	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Art should always be beautiful.	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Art should always have a concrete meaning.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral		Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral

		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	How old are you?	18–24	55–64	25–34	18–24	45–54	18–24	25–34	35–44	65+	18–24
	What gender do you identify as?	Female	Male	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
	Where in Seattle do you live?	Capitol Hill	University District	Capitol Hill	Green Lake	Capitol Hill	Capitol Hill	West Seattle	Capitol Hill	Capitol Hill	Ballard
	How often do you visit art galleries and art museums?	Every 6 months	Monthly	Monthly	Every few years	Yearly	Every 6 months	Monthly	Monthly	Yearly	Every 6 months
	If you don't often visit art galleries or art museums, why not?	I don't have time			Too expensive	I'm not interested in art	Too expensive			I don't have time	Too expensive

	How long do you typically spend looking at one piece of art in a museum or gallery?	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 30 seconds and 1 minute	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 30 seconds and 1 minute	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Less than 10 seconds
	What helps you look at a piece for longer? Pick as many as you like.	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, With someone who can guide the experience	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean, With someone else	Read the text for context, With someone who can guide the experience	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean
	What are 3 adjectives that describe your experience of contemporary art?	inspiring, thoughtful, powerful	strange, interesting, thought-provoking	expressive, vibrant, modern	challenging, rewarding, confusing	confusing, overwhelming, impressive	bold, creative, inspiring	chaotic, confusing, interesting	thoughtful, reflective, moving	confusing, abstract, intense	interesting, confusing, beautiful

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	I feel like I understand contemporary art.	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral
	I can get meaning from contemporary art.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
	I find contemporary art intimidating.	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral
	Contemporary art is too complex to understand without an art degree.	Agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral
	Contemporary art doesn't mean anything.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

	Art should always be beautiful.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Art should always have a concrete meaning.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

		31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
	How old are you?	25–34	35–44	25–34	18–24	45–54	25–34	18–24	35–44	25–34
	What gender do you identify as?	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female
	Where in Seattle do you live?	Ballard	Capitol Hill	Ballard	Fremont	Lower Queen Anne	Ballard	University District	Ballard	Green Lake
	How often do you visit art galleries and art museums?	Monthly	Monthly	Every 6 months	Yearly	Monthly	Never	Monthly	Every 6 months	Monthly
	If you don't often visit art galleries or art museums, why not?				I don't have time		I'm not interested in art		Other: I don't have anyone to go with.	
	How long do you typically spend looking at one piece of art in a	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 2 and 5 minutes	Less than 10 seconds	Between 30 seconds and 1 minute	Between 10 and 30 seconds	Between 10 and 30 seconds

	museum or gallery?									
	What helps you look at a piece for longer? Pick as many as you like.	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, With someone who can guide the experience	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, With someone else	Read the text for context, Know what the artist wanted the piece to mean	Read the text for context, Other: I'm interested in the technique or materials used
	What are 3 adjectives that describe your experience of contemporary art?	stimulating, challenging, inspiring	unsettling, intense, powerful	playful, imaginative, vibrant	meaningful, emotional, powerful	intriguing, mysterious, thought-provoking	challenging, abstract, inspiring	confusing, chaotic, expressive	emotional, reflective, deep	innovative, bold, thought-provoking
Do you agree or disagree with the following	I feel like I understand contemporary art.	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree

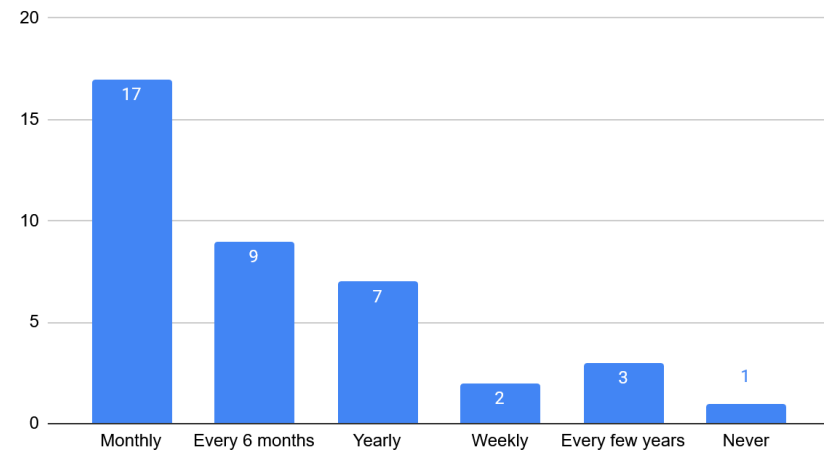
statements?	I can get meaning from contemporary art.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
	I find contemporary art intimidating.	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Agree
	Contemporary art is too complex to understand without an art degree.	Strongly agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Neutral	Agree	Neutral	Strongly agree
	Contemporary art doesn't mean anything.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	Art should always be beautiful.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

	Art should always have a concrete meaning.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
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SYNTHESIZED DATA

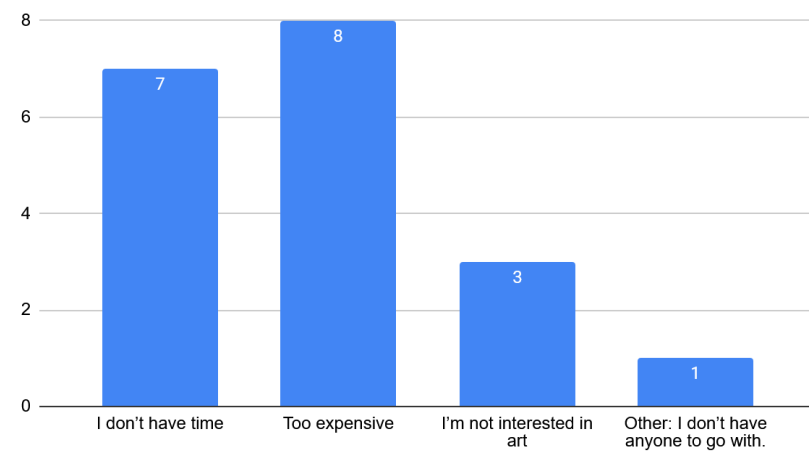
Of survey participants, around half visit art galleries and/or art museums monthly, and half visit less often than every 6 months.

How Often Participants Visit Art Galleries/Art Museums



Of those who don't often visit art galleries and/or art museums (those who visit every 6 months or less often), the most common reasons were that the cost is too high and that the participants don't have time.

If They Don't Often Visit Galleries/Museums, Why Not?

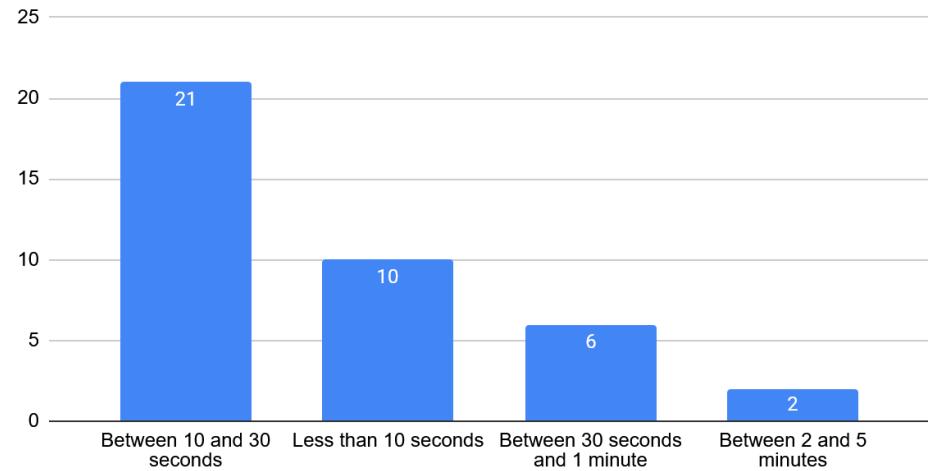


I asked this question because I wanted to determine if people were giving themselves a chance to gain something positive from a piece of art, or if they were simply looking quickly before moving on. In my experience, the more time I spend looking at a piece, the more I notice and the more meaning I can glean from it.

Most people answered that they look at a piece for between 10 and 30 seconds.

I also asked people what makes them look at a piece for longer, and every participant chose the option: “When I can read the text for context.”

Amount of Time Spent Looking at a Single Artwork in a Gallery or Museum



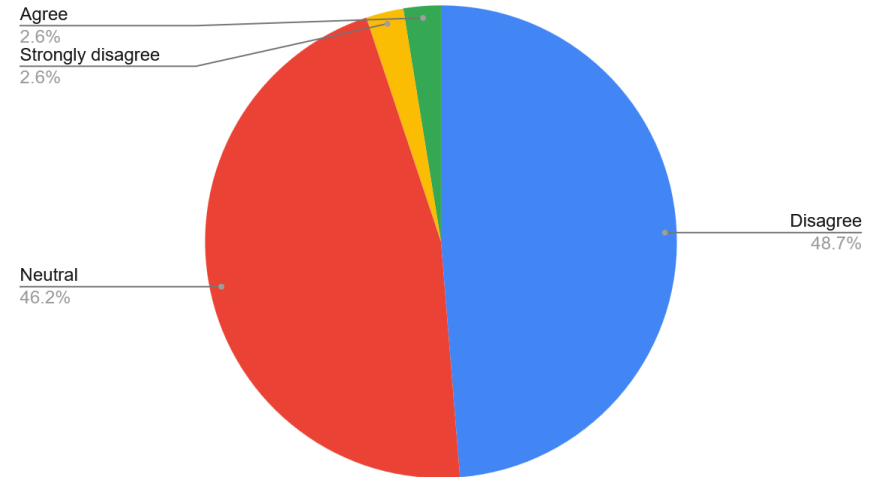
The most used words were “confusing” and “inspiring.”



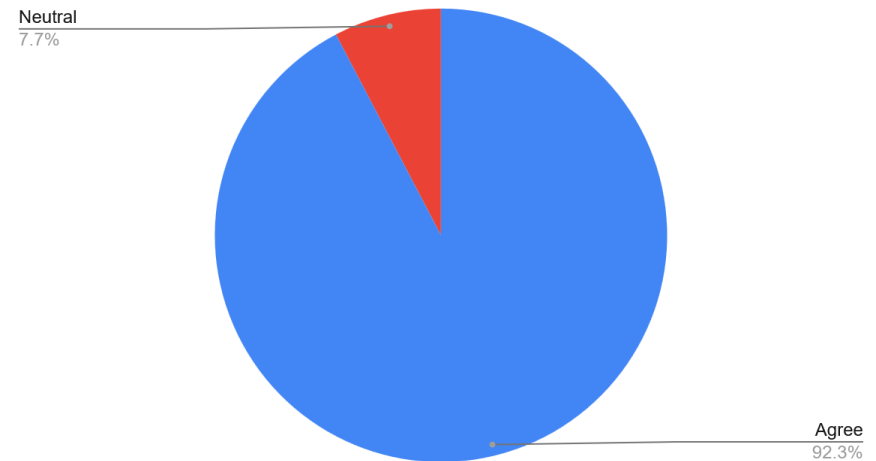
For the final series of questions in the survey, I asked people to answer whether they agree or disagree with several statements about contemporary art.

Most participants either disagreed or were neutral on whether they feel that they understand contemporary art, but the vast majority stated that they could get meaning from it. I interpreted this to point to the idea that, while people may not understand what a piece of art is “supposed” to mean, they can still get something out of it.

I feel like I understand contemporary art.



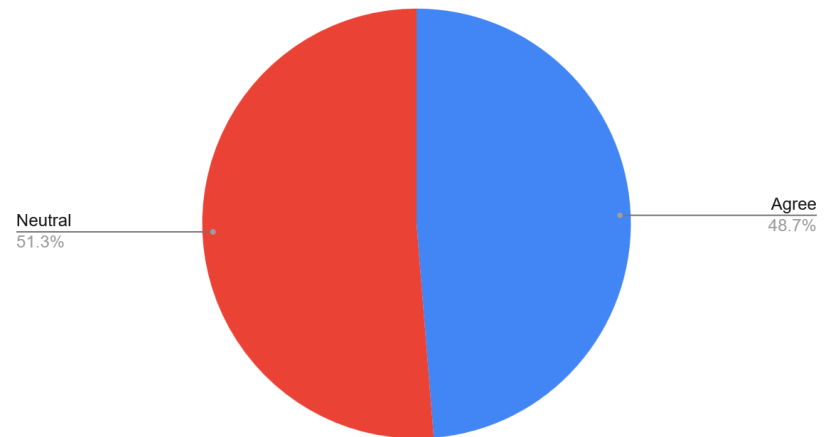
I can get meaning from contemporary art.



I asked these two questions because, in my experience, people have often stated that they find it intimidating to go to contemporary art galleries or museums because they don't feel as though they have the vocabulary or expertise to interpret art that is often highly abstract and/or conceptual.

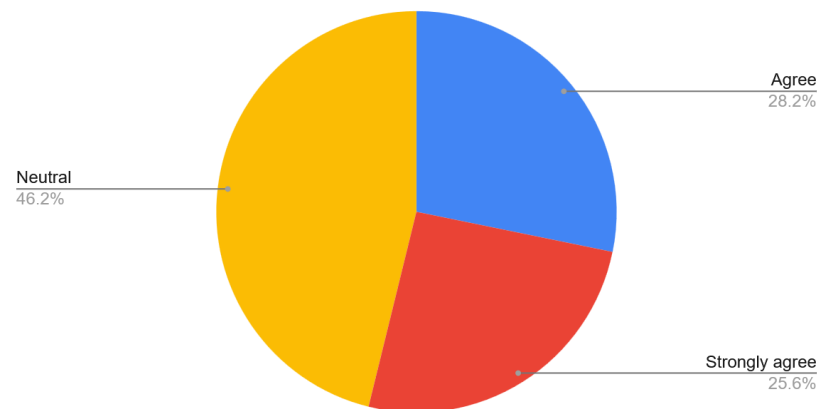
Just under half of the participants agreed they find contemporary art intimidating, and the rest were neutral. No participants disagreed with the statement.

I find contemporary art intimidating.



Around half of survey participants either agreed or strongly agreed that they think contemporary art is too complex to understand without an art related degree.

Contemporary art is too complex to understand without an art degree.



CALL FOR WORK

I decided to do a call for work instead of a solo or specific group show because the theme of Decay started out very broad. I wanted to see how lots of artists would interpret the theme, and, as a way of expanding the Vestibule's curatorial perspective, I wanted submissions from artists that hadn't shown at the gallery before.

I wrote the description text (see below) and sent the artist call to artist collectives, art departments, and both Kascha and I sent the call to several artists whose work we thought would be a good fit. Kascha was especially integral to the process at this stage, as she spread an extremely wide net to pull in submissions.

The call was open for one month and I received 100 submissions with 150 different pieces. Once the submission period was over, both Kascha and I rated each submission on a rubric and wrote down our thoughts (see pgs. 26-47), then we met to discuss who my top choices were and to decide which artists were going to be selected.

When reflecting on this part of the process, I do think that going with an open call was the right way to go for this exhibition, however, I do not think that it achieved my goal of reaching artists that had not had work in the Vestibule as well as it could have. While Kascha's connections and network meant that we received quite a few quality submissions, many of those were artists that had worked with the Vestibule previously. Had I done more to spread the call and sent it out to more artists, we might have gotten more submissions from artists that were outside of the Vestibule's network and thus better achieved my goal.

DESCRIPTION TEXT

The Vestibule invites submissions of new or completed work by single artists or small collectives for *Decay* (title TBD), an exhibition exploring how we navigate and engage with the inevitable entropy of our world, showing from April 4th – 25th.

The work included in the show should explore this theme of Decay from unexpected angles. Show us the joy of degeneration, the beauty of collapse, the peace that comes from crumbling into dust.

What kind of work is right for this show? While we are primarily looking for sculptural and installation work, we will be considering all genres. Be creative with your mediums and show us something we haven't seen before!

My name is Izzy Dunn and I am a Masters of Museology student at the University of Washington. I will be guest-curating this show with the Vestibule as my thesis project! As a curator, I love looking at themes from new angles and working with different, unconventional kinds of media, especially if there are elements of color integral to the artwork, so I look forward to seeing your submissions and working with you!

SUBMISSION RUBRIC AND NOTES

Name	Artistic Quality/Level of Detail	Diversity of Media	Diversity of Identity	Depth of CV/Portfolio	Relevance to Topic	PNW?	Total	Star Rating	Notes
Aubrey Birdwell	2.5	3	1	2.5	3	yes	12	5	I think this is a really interesting piece. I think it's a very different take on decay than a lot of what I'm seeing in these submissions, and I think its visually very cool. I like the reference to decay as something gradual and as something that happens to tech.
Basma Saleh	2.5	3	2	1	3	?	11.5	5	Egyptian artist. I think this is a very cool piece. It relates to the theme well, I find the form compelling, and its interactive! I love how it talks about decay as a force of creation. I also think the element of sound could interact with other pieces in interesting ways. I'm unclear on where she's based, and I can't find a website.
Carolyn Autenrieth	3	1.5	1	3	2.5	yes	11	5	I really like these pieces, especially "Descending in Two Parts". I'm reminded of fungi reclaiming wood and other organic material, which I think is very on theme, though we do have quite a few pieces referencing natural decay.. Definitely very polished as well.

Coco Spadoni	2.5	1	2	3	2.5	yes	11	5	Queer artist. I love this idea, and how the act of adding intrusive thoughts to the jar can become ritual-like. And I think the piece is visually compelling too, especially the way the colors interact (even the color reminds me a bit of decaying matter)
Jay Stoneking	2.5	3	3	3	3	yes	14.5	5	Queer, BIPOC artist. I love how ephemeral and temporary this piece is, and I think that the fleeting nature of the material is very related to the theme. I also love that he is attempting to create sacred/ritual spaces with his work.
Jo Cosme	3	1	2	3	3	yes	12	5	BIPOC artist. These are beautifully composed photographs. I like the lens of sudden decay as something that becomes routine: "damage turns into permanence." Also the ideas of needless decay, and places of shared presence.
John Schmitz	2.5	2.5	1	2.5	3	yes	11.5	5	LOVE the fact that people will be able to physically interact with the sculptures (would Schmitz provide objects to add?). Definitely relates to the theme, very cool that the objects are put back in nature after. I'm very drawn to the curves of the driftwood of the smaller piece, but would smell potentially be an issue? I also love the sea glass in the larger piece, but it is very large.

Julie Anne Mann	3	2.5	1	2.5	3	yes	12	5	I'm really drawn to the gradient and how delicate the piece looks. And I appreciate using insects as a way to look at decay.
Julie Baer	3	1.5	2	3	3	no	12.5	5	Neurodivergent artist. I really appreciate this view of decay as a part of a cycle of renewal, and I really love the texture. I'm especially drawn to "Pacific Acorn Barnacle Red," it really looks like a view through a microscope or magnifying glass, though with an artistic twist
Meghan Thréinfhir	3	3	1	3	3	yes	13	5	I find this fascinating! The sounds are interesting (and not overwhelming, so we could have multiple sound-based works), and the science behind how they are generated is super interesting. The connection to ritual practice/witchcraft is also compelling; I love that it isn't obvious at first glance, but appears gradually through active looking/context.
Nif Hodgson	3	1.5	1	3	3	yes	11.5	5	I think the idea of photography as a degenerative media is so interesting! And a very different take on a medium that most people would think of as a more objective documentation technique. Also really like what she says in her statement about "the decline of one state leads to undiscovered new states." The pieces are also really beautiful and polished.

Rebecca Cummins	3	2	1	3	3	yes	12	5	I really like these images, they remind me of images of deep space. Related to science, connected to nature, on-theme (fungi as agents of decay)
Robert Mertens	3	3	1	3	3	no	13	5	I really like that the material will rust and change color over time (how quickly will it happen? would we be able to see change over the course of an exhibition?), and I find the texture almost mesmerizing. I think the reference to petroglyphs is fascinating, and has an element of ritual (though not explicit).
Yuhanxiao Maggie Ma	2.5	3	2	2.5	3	yes	13	5	Asian artist. I agree! I think Solution would fit well with the theme, and I like the element of sound. Not so into the guinea pigs.
Aaron Wilder	2.5	1	2	3	2.5	no	11	4	Disabled artist, relates directly to work. I like how it relates to the theme with physical decay (with Details specifically), as well the themes of memory within the artist's larger body work. I'm less interested in the Season's Greetings piece.
Aimie Dukes	2	2.5	1	2.5	3	no	11	4	I also like this idea, and it's a different take on decay that what I've been seeing. I see something of a ritual aspect here too, as it is meant to be a memorial to lost youth/perceived value.

Angeles Cossio	2	3	1	3		no	9	4	I really like the idea of focusing on a decayer rather than decay as a force. Definitely materially interesting, and I like how the shapes mimic coral structures
Ansley Gwin	3	2.5	1	2	2.5	yes	11	4	Visually, I like this piece a lot; it almost looks like a physical embodiment of the essence of decay. I do wish it was a bit smaller though, as if we do choose it, it will take up a lot of space and limit the number of other artists we can accept.
Cam Smith	2.5	2.5	1	2.5	1.5	yes	10	4	Interesting media, but doesn't have much to do with the theme other than the fact that the image sort of decays. Could also raise issues of privacy as we'd have to make sure people are ok being photographed? I do love an interactive piece though.
Grace Flott	2	1	2	3	2.5	yes	10.5	4	Disabled artist. I like how it relates to decay - "disfigurement as a creative wellspring." Fairly conventional media, but I do quite like the colors.

Harold McNaron	2.5	2	1	1.5	2.5	yes	9.5	4	I'm interested in Two memories of the same thing, but I want more information. What kind of sacred objects? How does he honor them? What is his process like? Are the pieces digital montages or physical? I like the ritual/sacred aspect, but again, I want more info. Not much of an online presence (no website that I could find, just an instagram).
Jess Cheng	2.5	2.5	2	1.5		yes	8.5	4	Asian American artist. I'm intrigued by Sacrifice of the Fig Wasp (what is the optional sound component like?). The images that it evokes for me are very visceral and uncomfortable, and it has a connection to science. I've rated it 4 stars because I'm interested in the Fig Wasp piece, but I think we'd need another version of the artist statement that relates it to the theme more closely.
Julia Freeman	2.5	2	1	3	2.5	yes	11	4	I think the ideas present in this piece are fascinating: moral authority as decay, decay as a cumulative force, embedded violence of religious/national ideology and how that causes decay. I'm curious about the interactive element that she mentioned in her submission, I'd like to hear more about that. I appreciate the studio visit video. The piece does look like it will be very large.

Marina Shaltout	2	2	1	3	3	no	11	4	Different take on the theme (not nature related). I'd like to be able to watch the video, it's password protected on her website.
Noah Kashini	2	3	2	3	2.5	no	12.5	4	Iranian-american artist. I'm not sure about this one either, I think the idea of cultural decay as a result of over-consumption is interesting, but it definitely requires context to see the link. It is very different from the other submissions.
Pidge Pasqualle	2	2.5	3	1.5	2.5	yes	11.5	4	Indigenous, queer artist. I quite like Ephemeral Weaves, especially how it comments on decayed knowledge. Has an element of the sacred/ritual to it, specifically spiritual decay.
Sabin Timalsena	2.5	3	2	3	3	?	13.5	4	Nepali artist. I think this artist's portfolio is really cool and different. It looks like Whalefall is a collaborative piece, did both artists submit? or just Sabin? I think its a really interesting concept (I've been interested in how whale-falls are absolutely crucial to deep-sea ecosystems for some time), but I'd like a more detailed artist statement that talks more about the process and the ideas behind the different elements.

Sara Osebold	3	2.5	2	3	3	yes	13.5	4	Visually After Game (Hive) looks almost insectoid, which brings to mind Julie Anne Mann's work, but I don't know how much that is just a visual connection as opposed to thematic. I see the ritual/sacred elements in this piece as well, and it's definitely on topic.
Ann Marie Schneider	2.5	2	1	3	2	yes	10.5	3	I like what she says about "material evidence of disintegration as transformation," but I'm not sure if I see enough of that in the piece.
anna	3	2	1	3		yes	9	3	Seems more like an exploration of entropy rather than a typical meaning of decay, but its an interesting take. I wish there was some element of color, as the pallate is very similar to Robert Mertens' work.
Brittany Powell Parich	2	2	1	3	2	yes	10	3	Definitely needs the explanation for how it goes with the theme, but I do see it. Though I almost wish that the sandwiches were less idealized.
Caleb Wheeler	2	2	1	2	2	no	9	3	Not many shows, but a good-sized body of work. I like the idea of looking at decay through the lens of long-gone civilizations, but I'm not sure if I see that in the actual piece. I do see a ritual element here as well, but I'm not sure if its strong enough/if other viewers will see it.

Courtney Coble	2	2	2	2	1.5	no	9.5	3	BIPOC artist. Seems a bit far from the theme, but could be considered in contrast with decay because of the materials used. The works are somewhat unsettling, which could be good for sparking conversation.
Cyriaco Lopes	3	2	3	3	1.5	no	12.5	3	I really love the Debris slide show. I find it very moving and visually compelling. I just don't know if I see enough of a connection to decay (hence the rating)
GarthPierre AmundsonGour	2.5	1.5	1	3	2	?	10	3	I find this work very interesting, and it brings to mind some of the same things that Nif Hodgeson's work does. I do think that it might be too big for the gallery, and the connection to decay is a little thin.
Johanna Porter	2	1.5	1	3	1.5	yes	9	3	I think there are better options for reclaimed textile works.
Justin Gregg	2.5	3	1	2	3	yes	11.5	3	I'm much more drawn to the jewelry piece: different media, and I think the reference to entropy ("tension between control and chaos") is very cool. I'd like to hear more about how his art helps him to "draw close to my creator," as that could be a connection to ritual.

Kelly Haejung Paik	2	2.5	2	3	2	yes	11.5	3	I like that she's using decay as an active, creative experience and treating it as a positive, and the media is different. I do kind of wish that the piece was a series of smaller spheres and "spills," but I do like how freeform/"organic"/unmanipulated the shape is.
Kelly June Mitchell	2	2	1	2	2.5	yes	9.5	3	I like the idea of grappling with grief and death as they relate to decay, and what she says about letting decay into ourselves in order to make space for new things. Its a very personal piece too, an intimate look into the artist's grieving process (ritual). I also like how she intends to bury the garment for her father, letting the seeds grow/reclaim the fabric. However, I don't know if we have enough information about the proposed work.
Lalitha Bandaru	2.5	1	2	2.5	2	yes	10	3	Indian artist. I like the concept of decay of identity through urbanization, and its a cool implementation of a conventional medium. Maybe its just the mock-up image that the artist provided, but I wish the connection between urbanization and the natural world was a bit stronger.

Laura Hoppenjans	2	1	2	2	2.5	yes	9.5	3	Non-binary artist. Maybe more tangentially related to decay, but I think the ideas of memory as a potential source of decay (rather than decay as a certainty), and how decay of memory can alter experience to make them seem more positive in retrospect are very interesting. That said, I don't know if the proposed work feels like it will portray these ideas in a compelling way.
Leo Carmona	3	3	3	3	2	yes	14	3	Mexican, immigrant artist. I especially like Old/New Lamp, though I wonder how well it will fit in with other pieces (its very modern looking). Linking it to decay seems like a bit of a stretch, the pieces seem more focused on re-use and reclaiming materials rather than decay. Very interesting materially, and looks very polished.
Leslie Samson-Tabakin	2.5	3	1	3	2	yes	11.5	3	Would smell be a problem with the rotting bananas? Very whimsical, which is pretty different from the other submissions; I don't think I've seen a humorous take on the theme before. I quite like her larger body of work as well. The only thing I'm struggling with is that it seems like its less connected to the theme, but the connection could become clearer with more insight from the artist.

Lindsey Campion	1.5	2	1	1	3	yes	8.5	3	Very minimal portfolio. I think the ideas behind the proposed work are interesting, especially its connection to digital decay (often people think of the internet as being "forever," when it really isn't). I just wish We've Been Waiting For You seemed farther along, I think I'd need to see more detail/process notation/documentation to really consider it for the show.
Melissa Jones	2.5	2	1	2.5	1.5	yes	9.5	3	I'm a bit torn on this one, visually I find it very interesting, especially how it (to me) mimics stick charms used in witchcraft/Wicca, but I'm not sure if that is what the artist intended or if I'm projecting here.
Pierre Gour	2.5	1.5	1	3	1.5	?	9.5	3	I appreciate how important decay is to his process. I think that this artist's work would work better for a solo show where their larger body of work is more obviously represented. I'm not sure if it would be as interesting/powerful without the reference to other work.
Sam Grabowska	3	3	2	2	2	no	12	3	Non-binary artist. I'm especially excited about Oubliette/Souveniette, but it might be a bit of a stretch for the theme. It seems like the decay is more material than thematic in these pieces.

Sarah Jones	2	2	1	3	3	yes	11	3	She says in the statement on her website that she wants to create spaces for reflection, which I like. Also very related to the theme (decay of lost memories/fighting against decay of memory by documenting), but visually it's not as striking for me as some other submissions.
Sofya Belinskaya	2	1	2	3	2	yes	10	3	Immigrant artist. Beautiful watercolors, but conventional media. I like the inspiration for this work and the ideas behind it, I just think there are more interesting submissions materially.
Sophie Loubere	2	2	1	2.5	2.5	yes	10	3	The Poisonous Calm is definitely on theme, and I like the physical decay present as well as the story behind the piece. I'd like some more information on why she chose materials that she altered the photographs with. Knowing that she has exhibited these works as part of her degree, I think I too would like to see something new.
Susan Boye	3	1	1	2.5	2.5	yes	10	3	Really beautifully rendered, if via conventional media. Related to the theme, but sort of obviously

Susan Zoccola	2.5	2	1	3	2.5	yes	11	3	I like that the work has already been in the process of decaying, and we are seeing more the middle/end (?) of that process rather than the beginning. Lair also visually resembles an insect's cocoon, which connects with some of the other submitted works. We've definitely seen a lot of works related to natural decay, but I am definitely drawn to Lair, and I like the ritual connection in Nature Museum, Parrot Tulip (though I don't like the piece as much).
Suze Woolf	3	1	1	3	3	yes	11	3	Visually, I think these are beautiful - they almost look like photographs when viewed from far away. And they are on theme, but I think I'm most interested in some of the artist books on her website, its a more interesting/different execution than what she actually submitted (though the artist books aren't as on-theme).
Irmari Nacht	2.5	2	1	2.5	2	no	10	3	I don't know how I feel about these, and I'm a little confused. Is her submission the book that chronicles the process? or the physical books whose photos she uploaded? I think visually I'm more interested in other examples from the 100 recycled books project, especially the ones that she manipulated more obviously after they were outside. I'd also like to hear more about how the piece relates to decay thematically, as opposed to materially

Catie Burril	1.5	1.5	1	3	1.5	no	8.5	2	The idea of decay as social decline is interesting, and not something I've seen in the submissions so far, but the piece doesn't really do anything for me.
Clive Knights	2	1.5	1	3	1.5	yes	9	2	I'm more interested in some of the other work on his website than what he submitted. Not sure how much it has to do with the theme, though it is a visually striking piece.
Daphne Minkoff	2	1	1	3	1	yes	8	2	The idea of invisible decay is interesting, but the media is pretty conventional and I think there are more compelling submissions.
Grace Dunbar	2	1	1	2	1.5	yes	7.5	2	I know her, we went to undergrad together. I like the idea of devotion (connection to the sacred/ritual) "as a process of erosion and surrender," but I think the connection to decay is a bit tenuous.
Han Eckelberg	2.5	2	2	1.5	1.5	yes	9.5	2	Asian-american artist. I think these are decently interesting images and a cool medium, but I don't think I quite see the ideas presented in the artist statements in the actual work. The connection to decay seems pretty tangential. I also don't really love his portfolio.
Hannah Walker	2	2	1	1.5	2	yes	8.5	2	I like that its referencing an imagined smell of something decaying in Summer Rot, but the pieces feel almost like a first draft of something that could be more interesting.

Jeremy Rise	2	1.5	1	2	1.5	yes	8	2	I think some of his other work (from his website) is more compelling. I like the colors. Seems like a stretch for the theme.
Jia Jia	2	2	2	2.5	2	yes	10.5	2	BIPOC/immigrant artist. Smell would definitely be an issue with the decomposing cake. I think this work might be trying to say/do too much at once, and isn't my favorite execution.
John Howard	3	2	1	1	1	yes	8	2	I think these sculptures are really visually interesting and polished, but I don't see any connection to decay. Also a pretty small portfolio.
Juan Canals Carreras	2	2.5	2	2.5	1	no	10	2	Spanish artist. I don't see much relevance to the theme, though I like the idea.
Kami Bratten	2	2	1	1	2	yes	8	2	I can't find an artist portfolio either. It's not my favorite piece, a nice idea, but I don't think its a new take/something I haven't considered before.
Karey Kessler	2.5	2	t	3	1.5	yes	9	2	I don't see much relevance to the theme, and though she mentions mapping spiritual forces, I'm struggling to see it in the work.
Kathy Marie Bussert-Webb	2	2	2	3	1.5	yes	10.5	2	Abuse survivor artist. Not much connection to theme, more related to nature.

Kerry Sutton	2	2	1	2	2	yes	9	2	Agreed. Fairly on-theme, but there are other submissions with more interesting takes.
Kim	2	2	2	1.5	1.5	yes	9	2	Korean-american immigrant artist. Not a lot of relevance to decay, though I do like Fall Piece.
Kristina Ludwig	2.5	2	1	2	2	no	9.5	2	Texturally interesting, but similar to a lot of surface-level interpretations of the theme that I've seen.
Lauren Greene	2	2	1	1.5	3	no	9.5	2	I don't love these pieces, they seem like a more obvious take on the theme, and more related to death than decay as a process. Also not much online presence, I couldn't find a website or instagram.
Madi Stephens	1.5	1.5	2	2	1	yes	8	2	Non-binary artist. Not much to do with the theme, beyond medium itself (using found/reclaimed objects)
Mary Hannah Yeying Kennedy	1.5	3	2	2	2	yes	10.5	2	Asian-american artist. I do like that the topic is uncomfortable, I think the way she displayed the novel (the accordion fold version), and so far its the only graphic novel submission that I've seen. However, I agree that it doesn't seem polished enough compared to other submissions.
Matthew Harkelroad	2	1.5	1	2	1.5	no	8	2	I find these pieces visually interesting, but I don't see much connection with the theme.

Olivia Snow	2	1	1	1.5	2	no	7.5	2	It's an interesting idea to have the decay represented be in the mark-maker, but I also think it could use another iteration or two before it's really fleshed out.
Samuel Schwindt	2.5	3	1	3	1.5	no	11	2	The artist statement is confusing - there are a lot of words that seem like they are supposed to mean something, but feel a bit like jibberish. I am drawn to Dust Shake (2), but I'd want to see another iteration of the artist statement that makes its connection to the theme clearer.
Shannon Gardener	1.5	1.5	1	2	3	no	9	2	Not my favorite pieces, not as polished as I'd like. I do like the representation of all of the parts of the decaying process of flesh. She does also mention sacred spaces, but I don't really see it in the work.
Kate Rusek	2	1.5	1	3	1	yes	8.5	2	Seems like a bit of a stretch thematically (for decay). Visually I found these pieces interesting on first look, but less so as I look further.
Mariya Apostolva	2	1.5	2	2	1.5	yes	9	2	Bulgarian immigrant artist. Semi-interesting body of work, and I do like the physical forms of the pieces that she submitted. I just don't know if I see the connection to decay in the pieces themselves (it would definitely need context text accompanying the piece)

Rose Menyon Heflin	2	1.5	2	2	1.5	no	9	2	Neurodivergent artist. Very writing heavy CV, and overwhelming amount of info (62 pages!). We already have pieces that use rust. Not my favorite interpretation of the theme, and I can't find a website dedicated to her art.
Allen Braden	1	1	1	2	1	yes	6	1	I know we said we are accepting all kinds of media, but I wish there was something more artistically intentional about these poems, like layout/color/etc. I'm not a big fan of the poems themselves either.
Ania Solene	1	1	2	1	1	no	6	1	Slovak artist. CV doesn't mention artistic experience, and I can't find a website to see other work.
Denise Prince	2	1	1	2	1	no	7	1	Agreed, has nothing to do with the theme.
Devin Wilson	2.5	2	2	3	1	no	10.5	1	His process seems really interesting, but I don't really see how it relates to the theme.
Don Haggerty	1.5	1	1	2	1.5	yes	7	1	I wish the piece was an object and not a print (or maybe a series of prints cataloging the whole process), I think it would be more compelling. That said, the question that he poses in his artist statement is intriguing.

Ellen Sherman	2	1	1	2.5	1	no	7.5	1	Not my favorite, and not much to do with the theme. I like how it could change over time, but something about it doesn't look as polished as I'd like (that's purely a personal preference thing).
Flower Hua	1	1	2	1	1.5	?	6.5	1	I have very little sense of what this would look like. Decay as space for possibility is an interesting idea, but what I think would be implemented seems a little obvious. I can't find this artist online, and they didn't include a cv/portfolio.
Hazel Chambers	1	1	2	1	1.5	?	6.5	1	Trans artist. Can't much information on website, no shows listed.
Jieun Beth Kim	2	1	2	3	1	no	9	1	Connection to spirituality (ritual) is there, but I agree that the work seems not to have much to do with decay and is more focused on death.
Kelli Horan	1.5	1	1	1	2	no (?)	6.5	1	Couldn't find a website with information/portfolio, no CV attached. Pyrography is cool, but the rest of the paintings doesn't really speak to me.
Neil Berkowitz	1	2	1	2		yes	6	1	Not a huge fan of this work, I don't know if its polished enough. The ideas he talks about in his artist's statement are interesting, but I just don't know if I can see it.

Nicholas J Shiflet	1.5	2	1	2.5	1	yes	8	1	This feels kind of disjointed to me, I don't think I understand how the different parts of the pieces work together, and I don't really see much relevance to the theme.
Patti Walsh	1.5	1	1	1.5	1	no	6	1	No connection to theme.
Saloni Khedkar	1.5	1	2	1	1	no	6.5	1	Artist statement is blank, no portfolio website that I could find. Not particularly interesting paintings, and no relation to the theme that I can see.
Sampy Sicada	1.5	1	2	1	2	no	7.5	1	Not my favorite pieces, they don't appear as polished as I'd like. Interesting ideas behind the pieces (especially the reference to the sacred), but I don't love the implementation.
Susan Bagrationoff	1.5	1	1	2	1.5	yes	7	1	Not polished enough. I like the texture, but it's not very on-theme or very interesting.
Susan Schlepp	1.5	1	1	1.5	2	yes	7	1	Not very interesting paintings, related to the theme, but in an obvious way.

William Ross	1	3	1	1	2.5	?	8.5	1	Looks a bit more like a science experiment than an art piece to me, and I don't think that having something that smells like decomposing food is going to be a good addition to the show. Seems political in an angry, vitriolic way rather than in a meaningful way. Also couldn't find a website and couldn't open the CV.
David W Simpson	1.5	2	1	2	1	yes	7.5	1	Not super on theme or visually exciting.
Jon Feinstein	1.5	1	1	3	1	?	7.5	1	Not very interesting photos, conventional medium. Not super on-theme either.

LIST OF ARTISTS AND INCLUDED WORKS

This is the final list of artists and works that were included in the DECAY exhibition. We selected 15 works by 14 artists.

Pacific Acorn Barnacle Red (Balanus glandula)

Julie Baer, 2025

Mixed media on wood panel (acrylic, painted paper, iridescent pigment, stones, sea glass, glass beads)

Sacrifice of the Fig Wasp

Jess Cheng, 2022

Clay, glaze, paint, dirt

Spore Drift

Rebecca Cummins, 2020-Ongoing

Archival digital prints

the order of change / the change of order (march plans)

Nif Hodgson, 2020

Polaroids, acrylic frames, walnut shelf

the order of change / the change of order (playa)

Nif Hodgson, 2023

Polaroids, acrylic frames, walnut shelf

Solutio

Yuhanxiao Maggie Ma, 2024

Film/video

Leaf Lace

Julie Anne Mann, 2022

Maple leaves, tulle, linen

Half-membered Marks: In the Abyss of the Sky

Robert Mertens, 2025

Wool, wet and dry felting, felt casting, rust dyed, suture stitched, steel wire

After Game (Hive)

Sara Osebold, 2025

Found soccer ball, air bladder, pigment, metal, alabaster, clay, glass beads, bell and kukui nuts

Digital Selfhood

Basma Saleh, 2025

Interactive Digital installation; mixed media (multimodal sensing, generative sound, reflective spatial design)

Salish Cinerarium

John Schmitz, 2025

Film/video; driftwood, stones, concrete blocks, glass, bones, feathers, pigment, etc.

Jar 1

Coco Spadoni, 2025

Ceramics

Entropic Circle

Jay Stoneking, 2026

Dried botanicals

An Echo from the Bog that Professes Infinitum

Meghan Threinfhir (nee Trainor), 2025

Kelp, reed, velvet, bog in plexiglass, copper electrodes, wires, custom electronics

Whalefall

Sabin Timalsena and Anna Czoski, 2025

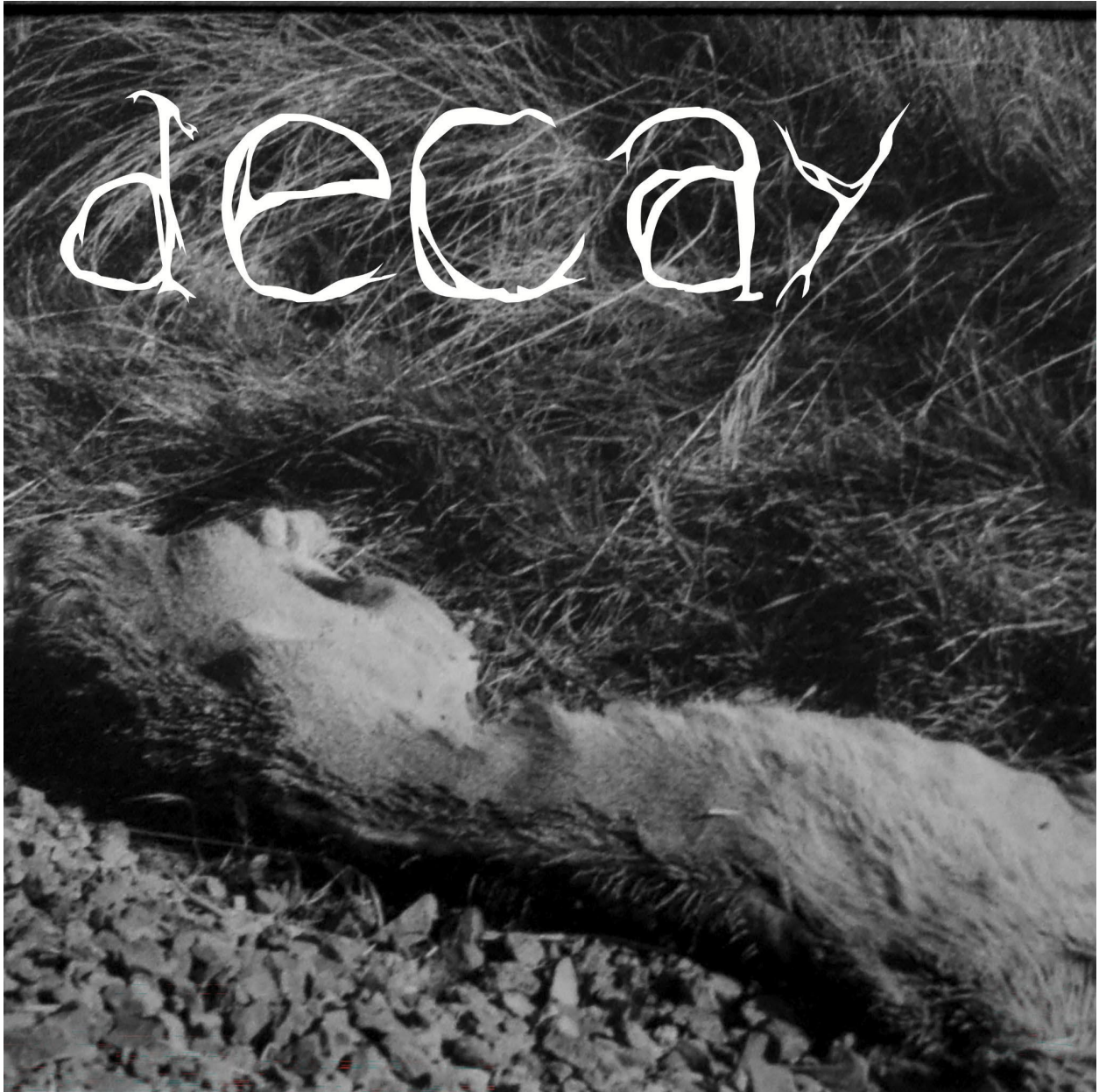
Kombucha leather, wood, 3D printing, realtime visuals

ASSETS

Below are assets that I created for the exhibition.

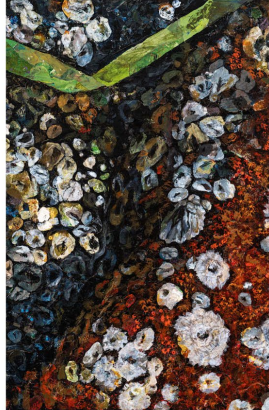
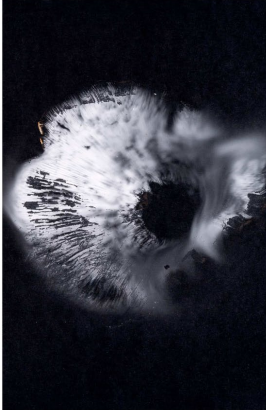
MAIN SHOW IMAGE

This image was used to promote both the open call and the show itself.



PROMOTIONAL POSTCARD

This postcard was also used to promote the show as something that visitors could take with them from the gallery.



Decay

EXHIBITION April 4 - April 25, 2026

RECEPTION April 4, 3-5 pm

Guest Curated by

Izzy Dunn

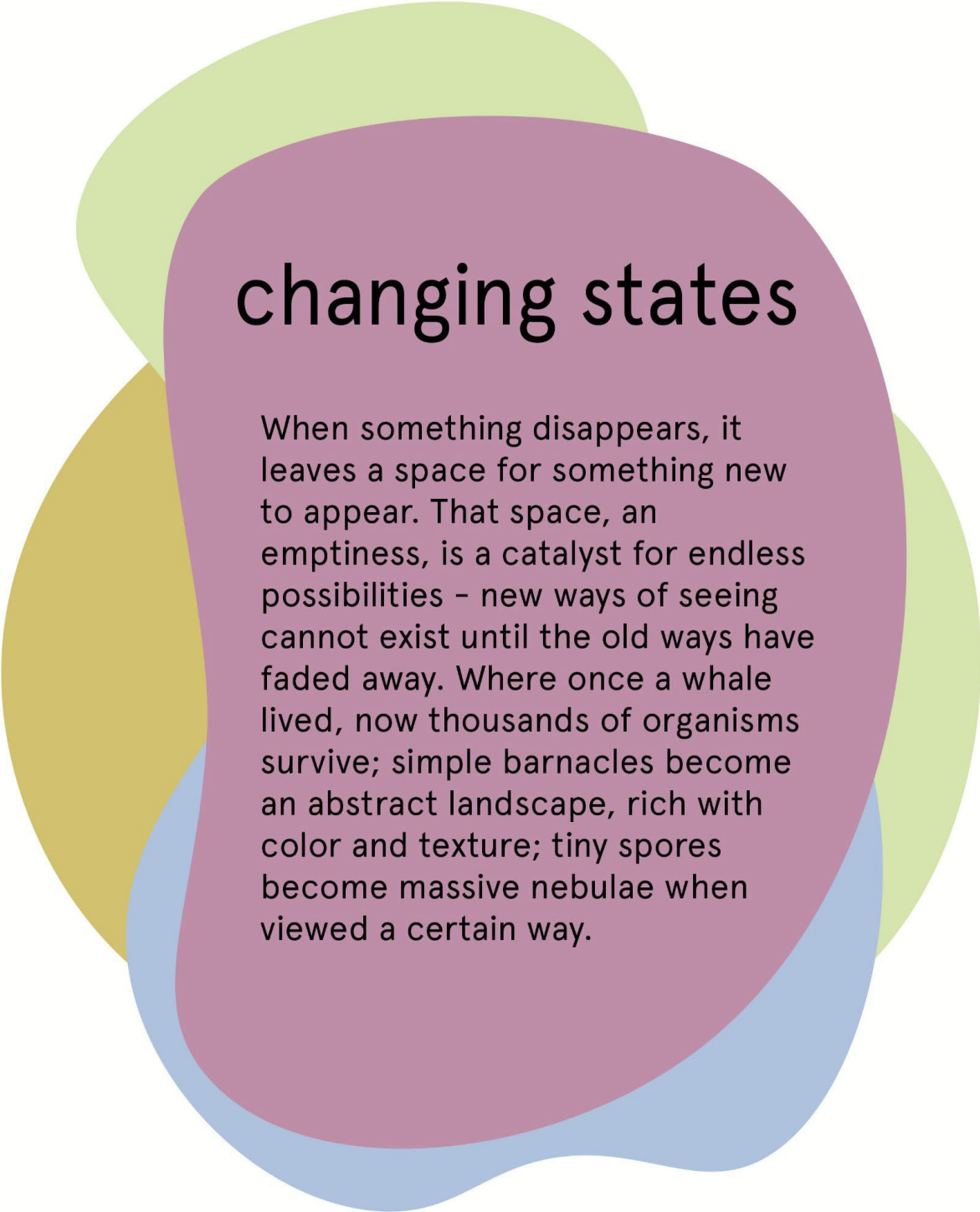
@sad_lagoon

[] the vestibule
home@thevestibule.org
@the_vestibule_
5919 15th Ave NW Seattle, WA 98107

Artwork : Rebecca Cummins (top left), Julie Baer (top right), Coco Spadoni (bottom left),
and Sabin Timalisena & Anna Czoski (bottom right)

TEXT BACKDROP

I made this graphic as a backdrop for the text in each section of the exhibition. I wanted to introduce an element of bright color to the exhibition, as many of the included works featured more muted color schemes.



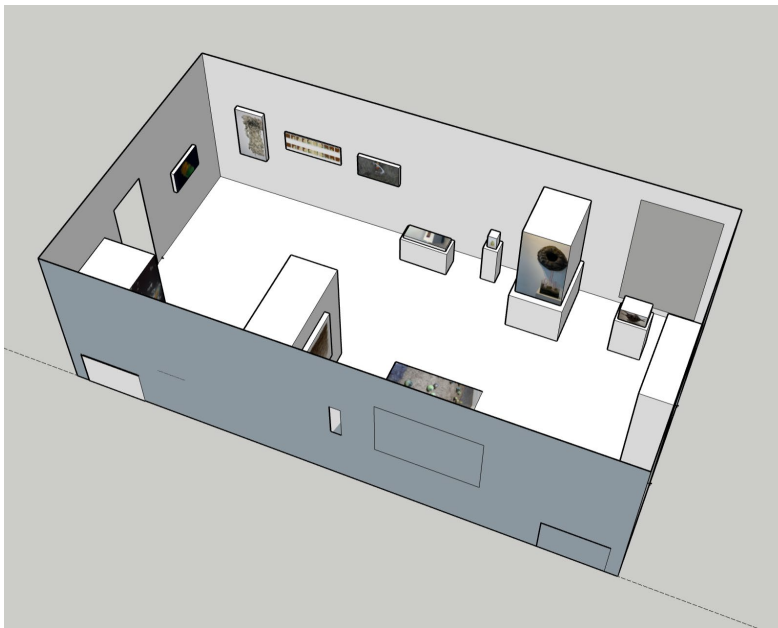
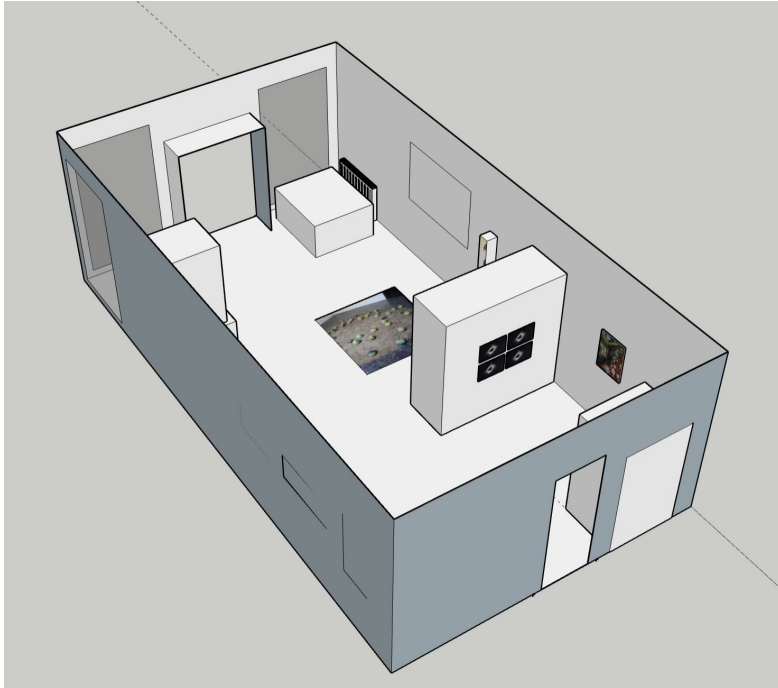
changing states

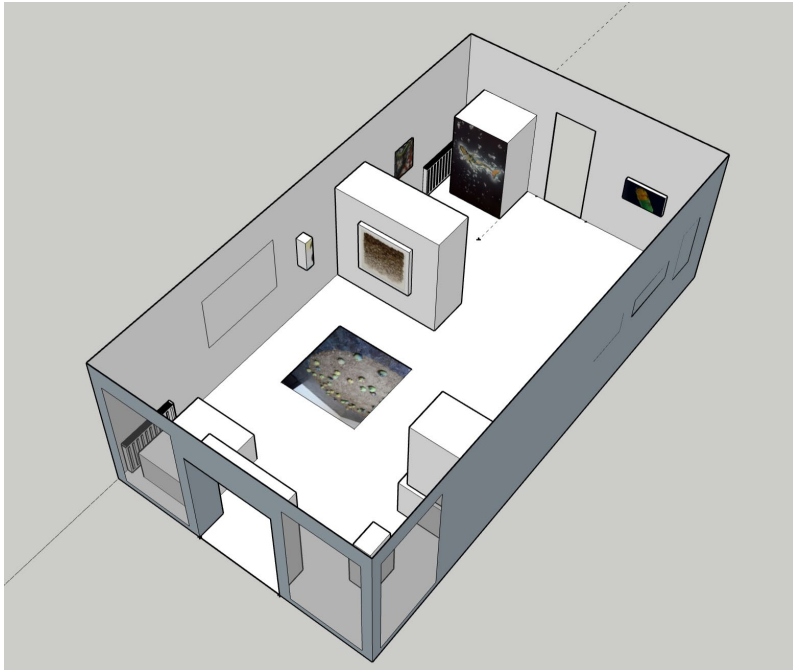
When something disappears, it leaves a space for something new to appear. That space, an emptiness, is a catalyst for endless possibilities – new ways of seeing cannot exist until the old ways have faded away. Where once a whale lived, now thousands of organisms survive; simple barnacles become an abstract landscape, rich with color and texture; tiny spores become massive nebulae when viewed a certain way.

LAYOUT

I used 3D modeling software to create a plan for how I wanted the show to be laid out, and so that I could create a physical flow for the exhibition. I found this extremely helpful, as I could visualize the entire exhibition as a whole and determine how each piece fit into the whole. I decided on the narrative of decay as a positive force for personal change or growth as I was creating the layout, and I used the physical space of the gallery to create four distinct sections (see pg. 56 for more).

SCREENSHOTS





EXHIBITION TEXT

Below is the text that I wrote for this exhibition. The four sections of the narrative that I created are Breaking Down, New Ways of Seeing, Changing States, and Creating Space for Reflection. Each of these sections explores a phase of change that a person goes through as their perspective shifts.

I wrote the Curatorial Reflection as part of my goal to help demystify contemporary art; I wanted visitors to know my process as I created the theme and narrative and to give some more insight into how the pieces fit together. I also posed questions meant to fuel critical thought about the pieces and the theme.

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Decay is all around us, intertwined with every aspect of our lives. Decay is the way your favorite pair of jeans wears thin at the knees; it is the slow, beautiful creep of fungi in a damp forest; it is our bodies breaking down as we age. But entropy is also how our perspectives change. Familiar thought patterns break down as we learn new ways of seeing, changing our state of mind and giving us the space for reflection.

This show explores decay as a positive force for change, demonstrated here through four sections, each mirroring a different stage of a perspective decaying and fading away to make way for another, newer way of seeing. Today, so many are obsessed with preserving themselves, body and mind, but we forget that change is inevitable and beautiful. Perspectives *should* change over time as we learn new things; it's how we grow, how we become better.

SECTION TEXT

BREAKING DOWN

It can be difficult, watching something decay and fade away, especially something that is a part of us. But before something new can be born, something first must disappear. The wasp dies, but the fig ripens; the spirit lives on long after the mind and body are gone; the leaves of great trees become lacy skeletons.

NEW WAYS OF SEEING

When something disappears, it leaves a space for something new to appear. That space, an emptiness, is a catalyst for endless possibilities - new ways of seeing cannot exist until the old ways have faded away. Where once a whale lived, now thousands of organisms survive; simple barnacles become an abstract landscape, rich with color and texture; tiny spores become massive nebulae when viewed a certain way.

CHANGING STATES

Seeing change may also change a witness. The first time you see the world covered in snow, the first time you notice the wrinkles on a loved one's face, these things cause a change in the world and potentially in you. Steel rusts and dyes fibers; medications dissolve to serve its purpose; the ocean slowly wears down sharp edges; abstract shapes in a photograph become mountains.

CREATING SPACE FOR REFLECTION

Changing is perhaps the most subtly difficult thing we do. It can create a sense of loss, of longing for simpler patterns, simpler times. But there is nothing wrong with feeling that loss, with reflecting on where you have been. Thank those feelings of loss, reflect on them, and place them lovingly into a receptacle; let the soft sounds of bog electricity wash over you; lay hands on something physical and create something never heard before; be grateful for what has come before and reflect in an ephemeral sacred space.

CURATORIAL REFLECTION

BREAKING DOWN

Breaking down is the first stage of something old turning into something new. The works in this first section all have something to do with insects: nature's great recyclers. From insectoid form to what they leave behind to how they fit into the ecosystems they inhabit, I wanted to explore how something breaking down can be beautiful, even if it is a bit sad.

NEW WAYS OF SEEING

In this section, I selected pieces that demonstrate different ways of seeing things that happen (or exist) everywhere all the time but perhaps escape notice. The humble barnacle becomes colorful and intricate, the spores of a mushroom turn into beautiful explosions that could come from outer space, and a whale's death becomes life for an entire ecosystem. Seeing things in new ways may help us learn and evolve.

CHANGING STATES

Here, I selected pieces that invite a change in perspective from the viewer. This section explores different types of change, from the quick, physical change of a pill dissolving, to slower, more subtle changes of metal rusting and the ocean's tides' effect on stone and glass, and to visual changes that come from looking at something differently; the shapes in a photograph turning into a landscape.

CREATING SPACE FOR REFLECTION

Change is not easy. It means that something is lost (or if not lost, at least different). This is why this last section exists, as a space for reflection. Without reflection, change becomes almost meaningless because you can forget the reason why you changed in the first place. This section includes works that lend themselves to creating spaces for thinking about what has come before, thanking it for its place in your life, and moving forward.

As you reflect on your experience of this exhibition, consider these questions:

- What is something in your life that has turned into something new? How did it make you feel? Do you see your feelings reflected in the works?
- How can loss be a celebration?
- How do you feel when your perspective starts to change? Is it a comfortable feeling?
- How has your point of view shaped your life? Your understanding of the world?
- How does your perspective shift as you look at something for longer? Do you continue seeing the same way? Or does your point of view change?
- Do you think change is important? Why or why not?
- Has your perspective on anything changed throughout your time in the exhibition?

PROFESSIONAL IMAGES (COURTESY OF THE VESTIBULE)

