

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026

**MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY PRESENTS THE EXHIBITION
*CARPE DIEM: SELECT ALUMNI IN THE VISUAL ARTS***

ON VIEW FEBRUARY 3 THROUGH MAY 3, 2026



Nancy Pantirer, *Metaphorically*, 2024.
Mixed media collage and acrylic on canvas.
Courtesy of the artist

Montclair, NJ — Montclair State University's Office of Alumni Engagement and Development presents *Carpe Diem: Select Alumni in the Visual Arts*, a group exhibition featuring twelve distinguished alumni working in a range of media, from painting and photography to video and sound. The exhibition will be hosted by the University Galleries from February 3 through May 3, 2026 in the George Segal Gallery.

The exhibition is curated by Sally Morgan Lehman, owner and director of Morgan Lehman Gallery in New York. Lehman has a diverse background in the visual arts, which includes museum education, exhibition design, public art placement, and collections management. Lehman has taught in the Department of Art and Design at Montclair State University and is a regular guest presenter at Boston University, FIT, the New School, and Pratt Institute.

With this exhibition, Montclair proudly celebrates its alumni in the visual arts, who continue to make significant contributions to the creative landscape. These graduates have successfully established themselves as influential artists, designers, and educators locally and internationally. The work ranges

from video installations and figurative paintings to graphic mixed media works, showcasing the exceptional skills and diverse perspectives fostered during their studies at Montclair.

The talented individuals in this exhibition exemplify the spirit of Montclair State University, where creativity is encouraged and nurtured. As we honor their achievements, the university remains dedicated to fostering the next generation of visual artists, ensuring a vibrant future for the arts community.

“Carpe Diem reflects what we know to be true about Montclair alumni: creativity does not end at graduation. Whether art was their major or a parallel passion, these artists demonstrate how learning, curiosity, and creative expression continue to evolve across a lifetime. We are proud to celebrate alumni whose work enriches communities locally and globally.”— Rita Walters, Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement.

Featured artists include:

- **Flávia Berindoague '13**, a Brazilian artist based in New York City whose practice investigates the intersections of human activity, social structures, and the natural environment. Engaging themes of memory, language, and geography, she works through a framework she calls imaginary geography, mapping the fluid territories where personal and collective histories meet. Across diverse materials and media, Berindoague activates memory as a form of temporal rupture, bringing past experience into the present. Her work has been exhibited in museums, artist-run spaces, and in film and television productions in both Brazil and the United States, and is included in public and private collections. She holds an MFA from Montclair State University, a BFA from Escola Guignard, Brazil, and a postgraduate degree in Contemporary Art from Minas Gerais State University in Brazil.
- **Bisa Butler '05** (b. 1973, Orange, NJ), whose dynamic, celebratory quilted portraits of people of African descent investigates the purposes and potential of portraiture within the Black historical narrative. Butler's influences range widely from personal family scrapbooks to American folk traditions and AfriCOBRA philosophies. Although her finished works are made entirely of textiles, Butler approaches the medium from a painterly perspective. Sourcing imagery mainly from photographs, she uses layered fabrics and quilting to create unique compositions, psychological depth and detailed textures that she found missing from her paintings. By returning to textiles, Butler has reconnected with her family's history since it was her grandmother and mother who taught her to sew. Butler earned her BFA in painting at Howard University, Washington, D.C. in 1995 and holds a MAT in teaching art from Montclair State University, New Jersey. Her work has been exhibited widely, both domestically and internationally.
- **Jonathan Calm '97** is a visual artist in the media of photography and video, and assistant professor at Stanford University. Through a varied array of media, he creates complex images of the Black American experience on the road as a precarious privilege rather than an inalienable right. Calm's art practice is international in scope and has been exhibited at renowned venues around the world, including the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Tate Britain, the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid and the ICA in Boston. His work has been reviewed in numerous publications, among which The New York Times, Art in America, The New Yorker, The Village Voice, Artforum, The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal.

- **Kyle Coniglio '10** earned his BFA in Studio Art from Montclair State University and his MFA in Painting from Yale University. He has been included in exhibitions and art fairs both in the US and internationally including Manhattan, Chicago, Madrid, London, Berlin, and Shanghai. Coniglio has had recent solo exhibitions at Taymour Grahne Projects in London, Library Street Collective in Detroit, Richard Heller Gallery in Los Angeles, and will mount a solo show with Capsule Gallery in Shanghai in 2026. He has been a fellow of the Queer Art Mentorship as well as an affiliated fellow at the American Academy in Rome. Coniglio lives and works in the Hudson Valley and is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Painting at SUNY Albany where he heads the painting area.
- **Alyssa Fanning '12** lives and works in northern New Jersey. A graduate of Pratt Institute (BFA) and Montclair State University (MFA), Fanning has exhibited at Pocket Utopia, New York, NY; the Glass House, New Canaan, CT; Newark Museum, Newark, NJ, Platform x David Zwirner, New York, NY; and Teckningsmuseet, Laholm, Sweden, among others. Recent solo exhibitions include *A Thousand Moons and Suns* at Platform Project Space, Brooklyn, NY and *Alyssa Fanning: Drawings* at Carlton Hobbs, New York, NY. She has been published in *Battery Journal*, *BOMB Magazine*, *Hyperallergic*, *Peer Review*, and *Two Coats of Paint*. Her curatorial projects include exhibitions at ABC No Rio, New York, NY; Eagle Studio, Brooklyn, NY; and Radiator Gallery, Queens, NY. In the spring of 2024 Fanning launched the lecture series, *Show&Tell Art Talks*, with artists Michael Lee and Patrick Neal, at New York Irish Center, Long Island City, NY. Fanning teaches drawing and design at Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ and Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, NJ.
- **Allen Ginsberg (1943)** was an acclaimed poet and a leading figure of the Beat Generation whose radical literary works and advocacy for social change left an indelible mark on American counterculture. Ginsberg first came to public attention in 1956 with the publication of *Howl and Other Poems*. Often, Ginsberg's poems contain references to his early childhood and young adulthood. Born in Newark, New Jersey, to a Jewish family, he grew up in nearby Paterson. Ginsberg briefly attended Montclair before transferring to Columbia in 1943.¹
- **Márta Kucsora (2005-06)** (b. 1979, Hungary) is an internationally recognized painter whose monumental, process-based abstractions investigate the behavior of materials and the forces that shape them. Working primarily with experimental techniques she has developed over two decades, Kucsora mobilizes viscosity, gravity, flow dynamics, and chemical reactions to create vivid, immersive surfaces where gesture and natural processes converge. Her practice stands at the intersection of intuition and scientific experimentation—an alchemical approach that results in works both technically precise and emotionally charged.
- **Michael Manning '11** is a studio artist working primarily as a painter with additional work focused on sculptures using repurposed materials and most recently Social Practice Art projects. He earned his BFA from the University of the Arts and an MFA from Montclair State University. His artwork has been part of numerous regional and international exhibitions. Solo and group exhibitions in Haus der Kunst Museum in Munich, Germany; Arnot Art Museum, Elmira, NY; University of Connecticut; Seton Hall University; The Flinn Gallery, Greenwich, CT; New York galleries including Pablo's Birthday and HP Garcia Gallery; Kohler, The Art of Inspiration Project; Red Bull, Kaustner and Partners; W-Hotel, New York, NY and other corporate collections and private collection. In addition to his studio practice, Michael runs Red Shoe Studios, organizing classes, programs and Social Practice Art projects. Michael is also the co-owner of ART06870 gallery in Old Greenwich, CT.

¹ Poetry Foundation. (n.d.) *Allen Ginsberg*. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/allen-ginsberg>

- **Nancy Bergman Pantirer '80** is a New York-based artist working primarily in large-scale abstract painting. Through abstraction, Pantirer invokes an ongoing dialogue between control and order versus freedom and randomness. Pantirer holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Hartford Art School at the University of Hartford, as well as a Master of Arts from Montclair State College. She further refined her craft through graduate coursework at Tufts University Museum School in Boston and Pratt University in New York. Her painting and sculpture have been exhibited throughout the country and can be found in collections such as the University of Hartford, as well as in corporate and private collections. Her studio is located in Tribeca, New York City, where she also founded 81 Leonard Gallery to uplift local emerging artists.
- **Tiffany Perez '09** is a New Jersey-based artist whose work bridges realism and culture, exploring themes of connection and inviting viewers to engage with pieces that feel familiar, nostalgic, and deeply at home. A lifelong creator—she began drawing at age two—Tiffany studied advertising arts at Passaic County Technical Institute and later earned her BFA in Fine Arts (Drawing) from Montclair State University. Her practice spans tattooing, pottery, textured painting, and realism, but her featured series for this exhibition focuses on color-pencil Moka Pots—symbolic pieces inspired by heritage and the shared comfort of home. Through familiar objects and rich detail, Tiffany creates art that resonates, invites reflection, and brings warmth into living spaces. She is also the owner of Ink Gallery Tattoo Studio in Fairfield, NJ, continuing her mission to create and uplift the community through art and tattoos.
- **William Pope.L '78** was a visual artist and educator whose multidisciplinary practice used binaries, contraries and preconceived notions embedded within contemporary culture to create art works in various formats, for example, writing, painting, performance, installation, video and sculpture. Pope.L began his career in the 1970s, creating works that find their foothold in personal travail, reading philosophy, and performance and theatre training with Geoff Hendricks and Mabous Mines. He studied at Pratt Institute and later received his BA from Montclair State College in 1978. He also attended the Independent Study Program at the Whitney Museum of American Art before earning his MFA from Rutgers University in 1981. His work has been the subject of important group and solo shows throughout the span of his almost 50-year career and he received numerous awards and fellowships.
- **Maria Valdivia '24** is a painter dedicated to shining a spotlight on the often overlooked and under-appreciated aspects of people. Drawing inspiration from everyday people and community life, Maria's artwork celebrates the unique qualities in the human body. She skillfully captures the essence of her subjects, inviting viewers to pause and reflect on the beauty and resilience found in the ordinary. Maria's paintings serve as portals into the rich inner worlds of her subjects, encouraging viewers to bring their own interpretations and emotions to complete her evocative compositions.

Digital Engagement

The University Galleries is a proud partner of Bloomberg Connects, the free arts and culture app created by Bloomberg Philanthropies. The Galleries' free digital guide is accessible via web or on the app store both onsite or offsite, and features audio, video, and text insights from artists, curators, and students. The Galleries' joins over 1000 cultural organizations worldwide with exclusive digital guides on Bloomberg Connects.

Public Hours

Segal Gallery

Tuesday – Friday, 12 – 4 p.m.

In addition to these public hours, we are open on select Saturdays of the month and by appointment.

Programs & Events

All exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public. All events occur in the Segal Gallery.

Opening Reception

Tuesday, February 3, 5 – 7 p.m.

Celebrate Montclair alumni at the opening of the exhibition *Carpe Diem: Select Alumni in the Visual Arts*. 6 p.m. Remarks by Jonathan GS Koppell, *President*, and Rita Walters, *Vice President for Development and Alumni Engagement*

Art Forum with Sally Morgan Lehman

Monday, February 9, 5:20 p.m.

Art Forum is a speaker series featuring artists, designers, art historians, curators, and art critics from around the world presenting their work and ideas in an open forum, hosted by the Department of Art & Design. Curator Sally Morgan Lehman will lead a walkthrough of the exhibition *Carpe Diem: Select Alumni in the Visual Arts*.

A Cross-Generational Conversation with Alumni Artists

Monday, March 2, 6 – 7 p.m.

This multi-generational panel celebrates the distinguished women alumni of Montclair. Featuring exhibiting artists Nancy Pantirer '80, Tiffany Perez '09, and Maria Valdivia '24 in conversation about their careers and creative practices, moderated by curator Sally Morgan Lehman.

About the Office of Alumni Engagement and Development

With more than 150,000 alumni in all 50 states and more than 73 countries worldwide, the Montclair State University alumni network is a powerful global community. There are many ways to get involved — expand your intellectual and professional growth through lifelong learning opportunities, continuing education or career resources. Invest in yourself and Montclair by getting involved and connecting with former classmates, fellow alumni and current students. Be part of a thriving network of fellow Red Hawks. Visit montclair.edu/alumni to learn more.

About Montclair State University Galleries

The Montclair State University Galleries brings together ideas, perspectives, and dialogues to foster curiosity and shared understandings through art. The University Galleries presents diverse and inclusive exhibitions and programs, creating connections that unite the campus experience with local and global communities. www.montclair.edu/galleries

Support

This exhibition is made possible, in part, by funds from the McMullen Family Foundation, the Dolph Gallery and Museum Studies Fund, the College of the Arts, and private contributions.

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