

The 21st Century Foundry: New Approaches in Teaching and Practice

Given our 6000 year history of casting metal objects, the question arises, can foundry be contemporary? Revolutionary changes in the approach to making sculpture in the last century have called into question the idea of a singular cast object: the lone bronze sculpture strategically placed high atop *the pedestal*. The ready-mades of Duchamp; the expansive material explorations in the found objects of Picasso; and Brancusi's focus on the pedestal; have resulted in a new genre of sculpture that challenges material singularity and the traditional isolated bronze form.

In the current exhibition, *Out of Hand: Materializing the Postdigital*, at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City, the possibilities of creative output utilizing digital fabrication and the impact of technology on 21st century artists are explored. Recent developments in digital technology have transformed the studio environment. As sculptors, we are drawn to technique and process; we build a toolbox of skill sets at our disposal to realize our creative ideas. The computer is now another common tool in our rapidly expanding arsenal within a studio practice. Will the interdisciplinary approaches found in postdigital work extend into the process of more traditional practitioners? What impact can the rise of new technology have on traditional foundry techniques and the artistic outcome? Can digital technology find a place in the studio of a contemporary sculptor, more specifically, a sculptor specializing in casting metal objects?

This panel will present artists of the 21st century that embrace the radical shifts in sculpture history, while successfully incorporating cast metal objects into their creative work. Katie Hovencamp will introduce artists that incorporate cast objects as performative gestures or body extensions; artists who create time-based performance works that include cast objects; and artists that utilize the casting process itself as part of their performative creative output. In response to the historical shift away from singular materiality, Kelly Wilton will explore sculptural works that incorporate cast components with other media to realize creative ideas: the hybrid object. New pedagogical approaches that incorporate digital technology into more traditional foundry processes will be shared. Cydnei Mallory and Cristin Millett will present strategies for integrating digital technology into the teaching of foundry, including CNC (computer-numerically-controlled) machining to create draftable patterns for sand casting and 3D printing ABS and PLA plastics to generate patterns for burn-out in investment and ceramic shell. With our culminating research, we hope to engender a conversation about the direction of contemporary art and the 21st century foundry.

Session chair and panelists:

Cristin Millett, Associate Professor of Art, The Pennsylvania State University

Cristin Millett is an artist whose research focuses on medical history, specifically the human reproductive system. In response to her research, she creates objects and installations that give insight into societal attitudes about the female body and question taboos surrounding sexuality. Millett began her professional studies at the North Carolina School of the Arts. She received her BFA from Kent State University and her MFA from Arizona State University. Millett has exhibited her work in numerous national and international exhibitions and her work has been reviewed in *Sculpture*, *Art Papers*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. She has received grants for her work, including a 2007 Individual Creative Artists Fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Since 2001, she has taught courses in sculpture, foundry and installation at Penn State.

Katie Hovencamp, MFA Candidate, The Pennsylvania State University

Katie Hovencamp is an interdisciplinary artist that creates work that spans sculpture, painting, drawing and performance. Interested in revealing when a construct fractures a unified experience of being present within one's body; her work questions hierarchies built by a body politic. Through installations, performances and sculptures she creates specific tasks that force the body to respond in a shamanistic manner. By using durational, repetition and endurance based actions; her goal is to create an embodied experience that summons vulnerability for both the performer and the viewer. Hovencamp received her BFA from Arizona State University in 2009. She is currently pursuing her MFA from Pennsylvania State University.

Cydnei Mallory, Research Assistant, BFA Candidate, The Pennsylvania State University

Cydnei Mallory is a senior at The Pennsylvania State University and a Research Assistant under Professor Cristin Millett, where they have investigated incorporating digital technology into traditional foundry processes. As a candidate of the BFA degree, with a focus is sculpture, Mallory dedicates her time to creating installations drawn from her strong attraction to mass produced and industrial materials, such as metal, wood, and rope. She has an interest in interdisciplinary studies, with a background in ceramics and printmaking. Since a young age she was drawn to a quick way of building and creating. Through her installations, viewers notice the small things, find beauty in the unusual, and question themselves and their environment.

Kelly Wilton, MFA Candidate, The Pennsylvania State University

Kelly Wilton is a sculptor born and raised in Tempe, Arizona, where she received her BFA at Arizona State University. To fuel her hoarding personality, Wilton creates sculptures that use a combination of materials and found objects collected on her frequent trips to antique shops. She explores ideas of human connection through installations, performance, video, and sound art based on her studies of theoretical physics. In 2011, she studied sculpture at the University of the Arts London, Camberwell University. In 2012, she participated in USUK Iron Symposium at the Scottish Sculpture Works in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, where her piece, *Lasting Memory*, is in their permanent collection. Currently, Wilton has made the biggest move of her life to pursue her MFA degree at the Pennsylvania State University.