

self assembled

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For Immediate Release

Self, assembled

December 15, 2022 – February 1, 2023

The Flinn Gallery is pleased to present *Self, assembled*, an exploration of identity through the medium of collage, featuring the work of artists Rodriguez Calero, Kevin Hetzel and Jason Noushin. In the hands of these artists, the technique of collage provides a complex visual metaphor for the hybrid and fluid nature of identity itself. By shaking up our familiar perspective, the artists compel us to look anew at the fixed narratives that pin us down, opening up fresh possibilities for re-imagining the self.

Kevin Hetzel investigates identity through the lens of socio-economic class, focusing specifically on his family's genealogy and working-class roots. For Hetzel, the physical, labor intensive technique of making art connects him to his ancestors' manual traditions of production. Hetzel carefully cuts out vintage family photographs and combines them with leftover financial documents mapping the economic realities of his subjects' lives. Going a step further, Hetzel composes hybrid, collage-like ensembles, hanging groupings of works together to create one individual portrait. He says, "My work seeks to challenge, restructure and expand upon [Eurocentric] traditions of portraiture to depict those who would be otherwise unknown... My hope is to attain a broader perspective of culture, society and life by challenging the boundaries of identity." Kevin Hetzel was born and raised in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and is currently based in Bethesda, Maryland.

Jason Noushin was born in England but raised in Iran where he experienced that country's brutal Islamic Revolution and subsequent violent repression. That repression, especially of women, continues to this day and informs his newest work, which is being shown for the first time as part of this exhibition. Noushin left Iran soon after the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980. He has lived in France, the UK and for the last two decades in New Haven, CT. A self-taught artist and collector of antiquated books, he uses their pages and bindings to create impromptu canvases upon which he draws and paints his subjects. "I enjoy the past. I love history. I find an inspiration in the paper and in the typeface and in the material that went into making the binding. All of that is inspiration...for the greater project [which is] about documenting human history. It's

about reminding viewers of stories, or of conflicts, or of our human deeds. I don't necessarily do the work to make statements but to generate interest in having dialogue."

Artist Rodriguez Calero was born in Puerto Rico, grew up in New York, and has studied and worked in both countries over the years. She says, "I am defined but not limited to being a Nuyorican, and embrace all that is an extension of my heritage and beliefs...I gather inner strengths from our never-ending struggles that we deal with as a people and as an individual." Her artwork mixes a very modern sensibility with references to traditional culture and beliefs, juxtaposing imagery drawn from classical art, religion, contemporary urban culture and her own Puerto Rican heritage, blurring lines of gender, ethnicity, race and sexuality. She appropriates her imagery from found printed materials such as glossy magazines, pamphlets, packaging, as well as her own photographs. Her vibrant and strangely captivating compositions attract and repel, featuring jaunty beings who revel in their unique ambiguity, caring not one iota for what we think of them.

Kirsten Pitts and Isabelle Schiavi are the curators of *Self, assembled* which opens with a reception on Thursday, December 15th from 6-8.

Special events include:

Artist Talk on Saturday, January 14th at 2pm in the gallery.

As part of the Library's Friday Film Series, on January 20th from 5 – 6.45pm, there will be an Art Lounge in the gallery to be followed at 7 by a screening of Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* in the Berkley Auditorium.

The Flinn Gallery is funded and sponsored by the Friends of Greenwich Library and is located on the second floor of the library at 101 West Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, CT. The gallery is opened daily Monday to Saturday, 10am-5pm, Thursday until 8pm, and Sunday 1-5pm.

For more information, please call the gallery: 203.622.7947

www.flinngallery.com