



**Lukas
Geronimas**

**Nevine
Mahmoud**

**Vanessa
McConnell**

Educators' Guide

**Los
Angeles
Municipal
Art
Gallery**



The Show.

The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) and the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG) are pleased to present the first institutional solo exhibitions by Los Angeles artists Lukas Geronimas, Nevine Mahmoud, and Vanessa McConnell.

Working in painting, sculpture and installation, each of these artists possesses an intense dedication to their craft and an obsessive compulsion to make and create. While the artists employ radically different methodologies, they share a labor-intensive approach, painstakingly working and reworking their materials many times over and over - be it wood, stone, or paint - to transform them into entirely new objects. In this way, Geronimas, Mahmoud and McConnell all point to the alchemy of the creative process, inviting us to consider the nature of our subliminal responses to specific objects, shapes, forms, textures, and colors.

Follow [@lamagbarnsdall](#) on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to learn more about the exhibition and related offerings.

The Artist.



Lukas Geronimas (b. 1980, Toronto, Canada, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA, pronouns: he/him)

Commissioned especially for the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG), Lukas Geronimas has created a series of new sculptural works that evoke ancient ritualistic and symbolic objects, such as a column, tomb, relics and other mystical looking forms that hold different meanings. The exhibition also includes pointed Gothic-style window frames composed of fabric and wood that make reference to LAMAG's church-like floor plan. In addition, the exhibition features a sculpture incorporating iconic elements from a cross-cultural range of devotional figurative sculptures.

Select solo exhibitions: *Seminal Echo*, 247365, New York, NY; Lukas Geronimas *LIVE from the Landing*, the Landing, Los Angeles, CA; and *Greatest Show on Rearth*, David Petersen, Minneapolis, MN. Select group exhibitions: *Strange Attractors: the Anthology of Interplanetary Folk Art*, Redling Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA; *Commodus Operandi*, Andrew Rafacz, Chicago, IL; *Continuous Surfaces*, Andrea Rosen Gallery 2, New York, NY; *Three Cups Fragrance*, Bodega, New York, NY; *Two and a Half Men*, Cooper Cole, Toronto, Ontario; and *Particular Pictures*, Suzanne Geiss Company, New York, NY.

The Artwork.



Barnsdall Column

plexiglass, wood, aluminum, and steel

100 x 20 x 20 inches

2021

courtesy of the artist

A highly-skilled woodworker, Lukas Geronimas is inspired by detailed craftsmanship, ancient art, and symbolic objects with spiritual significance and sacred spaces. Geronimas hand-makes each sculpture with a devotional care and attention that could be described as an act of love. The artist spends many thousands of hours of labor cutting, carving, polishing and detailing his sculptures, and is deeply selective about the materials he chooses to use to create his works.

For ***Barnsdall Column***, Geronimas sourced old mahogany shiplap planks from a reclaimed lumber store in El Sereno, CA. This wood is rare and expensive, as it is considered a vulnerable species. When selecting materials for his sculptures, Geronimas is particularly drawn to the patina of use and age, which is evident in the wood's rings of growth. The planks in this work, for instance, show signs of discoloration from sun exposure and water damage.

In thinking about his particular creative practice and work, Geronimas hopes viewers consider the long and labor-intensive process of the artist or craftsperson, how materials change to take on special meanings and how these new objects leave a trace of their maker, particularly in an increasing digitization of our daily life.

Discussion Prompts:

- As you view the artwork, *Barnsdall Column*, think about where you would see something like this in everyday or imaginary life? What would this object be used for?
- If you were going to build something similar to *Barnsdall Column*, what materials and tools would you use? Why?
- What would you want the viewer to think of when they view the artwork you've created?

The Artist.



Nevine Mahmoud (b. 1988, London, England, lives and works in Los Angeles, CA, pronouns: she/her)

Nevine Mahmoud's exhibition includes several recent sculptures and installations shown together for the first time alongside a selection of new works created specifically for the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery. The sculptures range from the everyday (a ball) to luscious (succulent peaches) with a good dose of the physical (a tongue, breasts) to fill out the exhibit. The exhibit also includes a wall piece which is a play on the abacus.

Select solo exhibitions include: *The Artist is Present*, Yuz Museum, Shanghai; *foreplay*, M+B Gallery, West Hollywood, CA. Select group exhibitions: *Dreamers Awake: Women Artists After Surrealism*, White Cube, London; *The Poet, the Critic and the Missing*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and *MADemoiselle*, Centre Régional D'art Contemporain Occitanie, Sète.

The Artwork.



Slick Slice

calcite and glass

5 x 9 ½ x 2 ½ inches

2017

courtesy of Lynn and Greg Davis
and M+B Gallery

Nevine Mahmoud creates sculptures from glass, steel, resin and precious stones such as onyx, alabaster and marble. Her work often takes the form of large, juicy fruits or parts of the body, as well as objects of play such as beach balls. The surfaces of her sculptures are glossy, polished and very smooth, while the colors are bright candy-like jewel tones.

Mahmoud has been experimenting with a variety of forms, shapes and textures to create her sculptures. In ***Slick Slice***, the artist has rendered a piece of a fruit, perhaps a peach or orange, and added the appearance of cascading water droplets. The highly polished surface of this work and Mahmoud's works in general create a desire to touch the surface and experience the texture. However, we can only imagine what these vibrantly colored, smooth sculptures would feel like as we admire them.

Discussion Prompts:

- When you first look at Slick Slice, what does it make you think of? What is your reaction?
- What food item would you like to replicate in a sculpture and why?
- Knowing that Mahmoud used calcite and glass as the materials for the sculpture, what materials would you use for your own artwork and what would your process be?

The Artist.



Vanessa McConnell (b. 1960, Houston, TX, lives and works in Los Angeles, pronouns: she/her)

Vanessa McConnell's exhibition features a selection of recent abstract brightly colored paintings, works on paper and found objects. The exhibition also includes a selection of ephemera generated by McConnell's distinctive process, such as a series of paint-drenched brushes and vessels from the studio, that have acquired a lacquered appearance over time.

McConnell started her art practice at the Exceptional Children's Foundation (ECF) Art Centers in 1983 at the MLK studio in South LA, and now works from the ECF Art Center Westside studio located in Inglewood, California. The ECF Art Center Westside is one of ECF's five progressive art studios supporting adult artists with developmental disabilities.

The Artwork.



Untitled

acrylic on found wood frame

17 x 13 ¾ x 2 inches

courtesy of the artist and ECF Art
Centers

Vanessa McConnell creates highly textured, multicolored paintings on paper, canvas and other objects by adding layers of paint. McConnell's multi-colored artworks are characterized by their thick highly textured impasto surfaces and strong, expressive brushstrokes and mark-making, showing her strong desire to paint. This compulsive artistic practice sometimes leads to tears and rips in the paint (as seen in this particular work, *Untitled*), canvas or piece of paper the artist utilizes to create her work.

McConnell works on a single painting for several months until she is satisfied with the texture and colors. During her long, labor-intensive creative process, McConnell uses a variety of paint brushes and experiments with a range of tones and techniques to create the layers of paint seen in her work. She paints until her brushes become so thickly covered and encrusted with layers of dried paint that they become their own unique objects, and eventually become too heavy to be used.

Discussion Prompts:

- McConnell uses layers and layers of paint to create her artwork. If you wanted to create a similar artwork but couldn't use paint, what media would you use and why? How would you apply the media?
- Is there a particular color palette that you would want to use? What kind of feelings would the use of these colors evoke in the viewer?
- McConnell also uses a lot of “found objects.” What is an example of a “found object” that you could use in your artwork? What story would it tell?

Art Activity: “Layers of Color” 2-D to 3-D Textured Abstract Pastel Drawing and Sculpture

What you will need:

- Oil pastels or crayons (if pastels are not available)
- Construction or other thick paper in any size or color
- Pencil or popsicle stick
- Paper towels

Optional: covering (recycled newspaper or clean paper bags) to keep the work surface clean

Step 1: Using oil pastels or crayons, cover both sides of the paper with shapes, free-form designs and a variety of straight, curvy and wavy lines. You can choose any color or combination of colors.

Step 2: For the second layer, cover the first layer with more pastels or crayons, again, drawing shapes, free-form designs and different types of lines. Do this on both sides of the paper.

Step 3: Repeat the layering of colors over colors one or two more times, until the surface on both sides of the paper is very thick with pastel or crayon marks. (Don't worry if the pastel or crayon breaks! You can still use it to add to your abstract textured drawing.)

Step 4: Using a pencil, popsicle stick, or your fingers covered with a paper towel, scrape lines and marks into the surface. This will reveal the colors and paper underneath. Do this on both sides of the paper.

Step 5: Fold the paper in half either vertically or horizontally and crease the folded edge.

Step 6: Fold the paper in half again and crease the folded edge.

Step 7: Open up the folded paper. You will have four sections.

Optional: Fold, bend and crease the paper and corners to create a three-dimensional artwork.

Your three-dimensional abstract textured artwork is complete!

Resources.

Lukas Geronimas parkergallery.com/artists/lukas-geronimas

Nevine Mahmoud www.nevinemahmoud.com/

Vanessa McConnell and ECF www.artecf.org/mcconnell-vanessa

Cover: Nevine Mahmoud, *Slick Slice*, calcite and glass, 5 x 9.5 x 2.5 inches, 2017, courtesy of Lynn and Greg Davis and M+B, Los Angeles; Lukas Geronimas portrait courtesy of artist; Nevine Mahmoud portrait courtesy of Claire Coltrell; Vanessa McConnell portrait courtesy of ECF Art Centers.

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#GeronimasatLAMAG #MahmoudatLAMAG #McConnellatLAMAG

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