

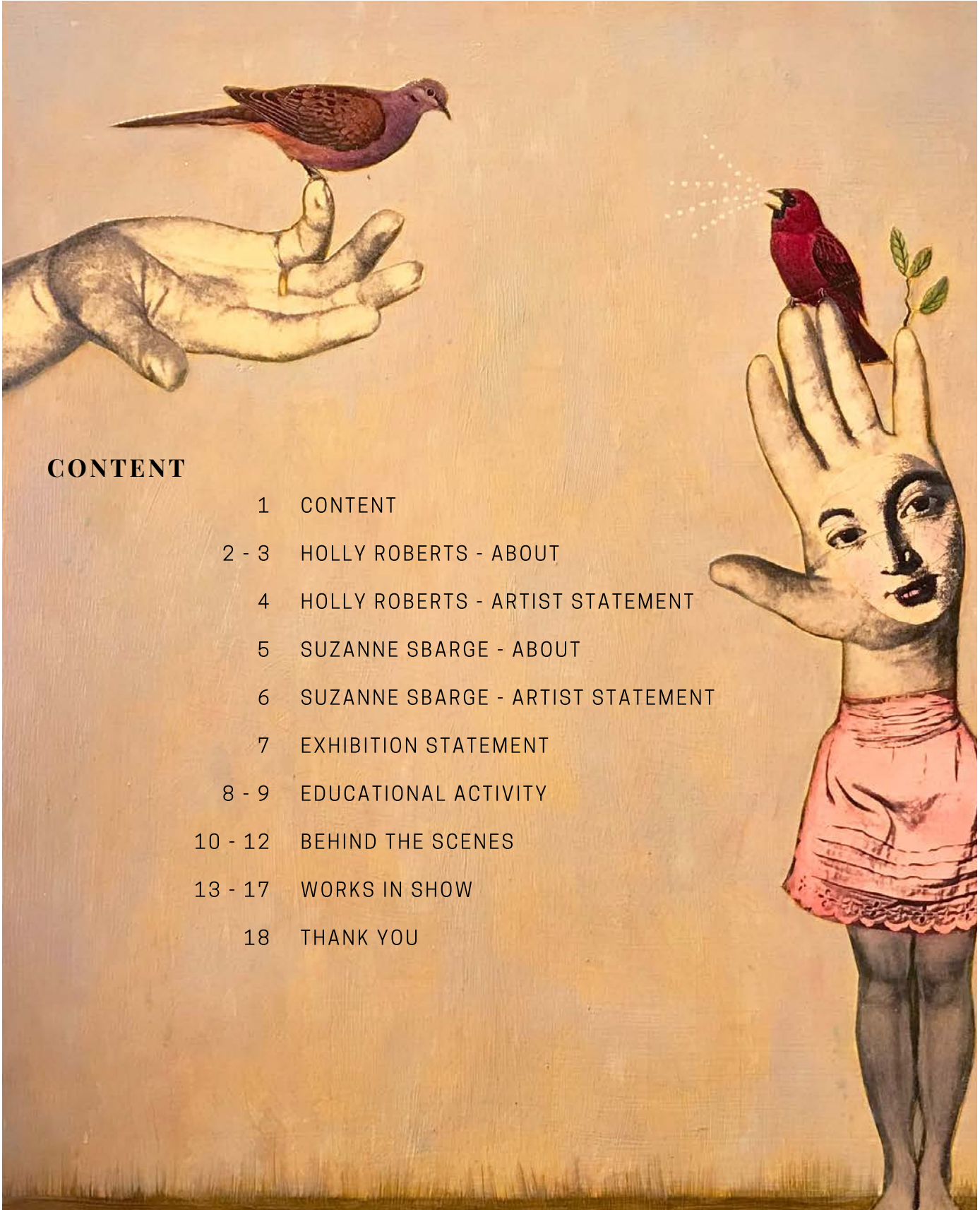
FICTIVE STRATEGIES

SUZANNE SBARGE & HOLLY ROBERTS

OCT. 2, 2020 - JUNE 5, 2021

MAIN GALLERY





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ABOUT THE ARTIST

HOLLY ROBERTS



Holly Roberts' first national exposure came in 1989 with the publication of the monograph, "Holly Roberts", from the Untitled Series published by the Friends of Photography. Although her work has always been based on the photograph, it was the inclusion of paint that made it so distinct. As David Featherstone says in his introduction, "Roberts is a painter, yet it is the photograph underlying the paint, even when it can scarcely be seen, that gives the work its intriguing, mysterious power."

Drawing from the iconography of primitive art, particularly that of the Native American, Mexican and Hispanic cultures of the Southwest, where she lives, she creates paintings that address a broad range of human emotions. While it is Roberts' evolving interaction with the photograph that takes her to her finished work, it is the existence of the underlying photographic image—even when it is obscured by paint—that gives the work its powerful qualities and sets up the emotional challenge for the viewer."



ABOUT THE ARTIST

HOLLY ROBERTS

Her work has continued to evolve, but she has reversed her original process of heavily overpainting the black and white silver print. She now works on top of a painted surface, developing a narrative scene with collaged photographic elements. Where earlier pieces reflected psychological or emotional undercurrents, newer works make use of familiar or iconic stories to address tougher questions about man's effect on the land and the animals that inhabit it.

In 1990, Nazraeli Press published *Holly Roberts: Works 1989-1999*, and in 2009 *Holly Roberts: Works 2000-2009*. The Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester, Massachusetts published an extensive catalog of her work in 2018 to go with her retrospective at the museum. A dedicated teacher as well as a prolific artist, she has had a profound effect on a community of artists around the country. She continues to live and work in the Southwest.



ARTIST STATEMENT

HOLLY ROBERTS



I work intuitively, painting an abstract image before applying bits and pieces of photographic fragments and other materials on the surface of the painting. What I am trying for is a painting that can stand alone but that won't dominate the collage that is to follow. However, in large part, it is the painting that determines what is to follow; the colors, the movement, the essence of the paint.

Once I start forming the image, I select materials that speak to me. Most of what I use are photographs that I have taken and materials that I have either made or collected. These bits and pieces will provide the structure of the story as it unfolds, giving me the clues I need to understand where I'm headed. It's much like following a trail of breadcrumbs through the forest; not knowing where I'm headed but trusting that I will, eventually, arrive. The collage works best when the pieced photos make up something that they aren't about literally, but have a metaphorical or poetic connection, either through subject or texture.



The large concerns in my life are at the core of my work: the degradation of the environment, spiritual meaning in a world of polarized and extremist views, the stress and fear of aging, the daily fears and anxieties of being alive in the world today. My default subjects are usually awkward, sometimes threatening, and most often, a little lonely. My work is about the people, animals, and landscapes which inhabit my world, both urban and wild. As well, I have always had an ongoing fascination with portraiture, trying to capture an essence without being too literal.

These collages allow me to continue to do what I have always done with my art; by processing the world through my eyes and my hands, I am able to make a greater sense of the confusion, the complexity, and the humor of the world around me.

HOLLY ROBERTS

ABOUT THE ARTIST

SUZANNE SBARGE



Suzanne Sbarge was born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1965. She has lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico since 1989. She received her B.A. degree in Art History and Studio Arts from Barnard College in New York City (1987) and her M.A. degree in Art Education from the University of New Mexico (1991). She has also studied studio arts at L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Toulouse, France; Syracuse University in Florence, Italy; The Art Students' League in New York City; University of Connecticut; University of Massachusetts; as well as Anderson Ranch in Colorado, Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina and Vermont Studio Center.

Her work has been exhibited in over 75 group exhibitions and 15 solo shows since the late 1980s.

It is in the collections of over 100 local, national and international collectors, and has been represented at galleries across the United States.

In addition to her own work, she is a gallery director, curator, graphic designer and arts consultant. She is the Founder/Executive Director of 516 ARTS in Albuquerque, an independent, non-collecting contemporary art museum in downtown Albuquerque.

ARTIST STATEMENT

SUZANNE SBARGE



In my mixed media collage paintings, I depict hybrid characters and creatures, exploring the place of animals in the human imagination during this time of rapid environmental change. I work with a wide range of current, extinct and/or imagined animals and fauna, with an emphasis on birds and avian life forms. Through my art process, I connect with the reality that we are not just interconnected with animals, we are animals.

My process involves trying to access the place of dreams, the nonlinear, open-ended, mysterious place, where the conscious mind is not in charge. "Animals wake up the imagination," said James Hillman in *Dream Animals*. "You see a deer by the side of the road, or geese flying in formation, and you become hyper-alert...animal dreams can do this too... As we get more into imagining, we get more animal-like...."

The juxtaposition of paint and collage in my work gives a sense of altered vision. This "collaged state of mind" - the dialogue between the real and the surreal - is what I look for. Ever-present are the dualities of familiarity and otherworldliness, interior and exterior, domesticity and freedom, sky and earth, real and imagined.

Hillman said "The idea that we know ourselves through animals appears again and again in theories of the origins of consciousness. Some peoples say the animals once had all the knowledge and transmitted it to us." In this body of work, I am seeking reflections of animal consciousness within all of us.

EXHIBITION STATEMENT

WRITTEN BY
MARY ANNE REDDING

Suzanne Sbarge and Holly Roberts share a similar sensibility; they both use collage, weaving textures and images which are incorporated into surrealistically enigmatic artworks that open subconscious doorways into the ambiguous space of the night: haunting dreams brim with narrative probability remaining stubbornly resistant to literal interpretation. There are libraries of potential in a single image— the lyricism of worlds breaking apart to be restructured into new impossible possibilities, the lost physicality of photograph, paint, and paper in our smooth digital age— memories of a time when human and animals were more closely connected.

Both artists live in and are intimately familiar with the New Mexico landscape where a deep stillness is part of the character of both the land and the people who inhabit it.

Roberts and Sbarge are committed to the stillness of their creative practices and taking long walks at sunset, the bewitching hours of lingering dusk when the birds sing their final songs of the day before settling into their nests as the sun sets and the shadows lengthen. As night falls the nocturnal animals emerge finding their way onto the artists' canvases. The power of dreams is that they open the heart and the mind to endless possibilities. In these images, the dreams of the artists emerge from the shadows to inhabit shared spaces where we are called to a deep interpretation of what we see and what remains unspoken.

EDUCATION

Join the Turchin Center in creating collage with Holly Roberts and Suzanne Sbarga.

"I work intuitively, painting an abstract image before applying bits and pieces of photographic fragments and other materials on the surface of the painting."

HOLLY ROBERTS

HOLLY ROBERTS

- [Artist website](#)
- [Art Talk](#)
- [Artspace](#)

SUZANNE SBARGE

- [Artist website](#)
- [Albuquerque Journal](#)
- [Pasatiempo Article](#)



EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY

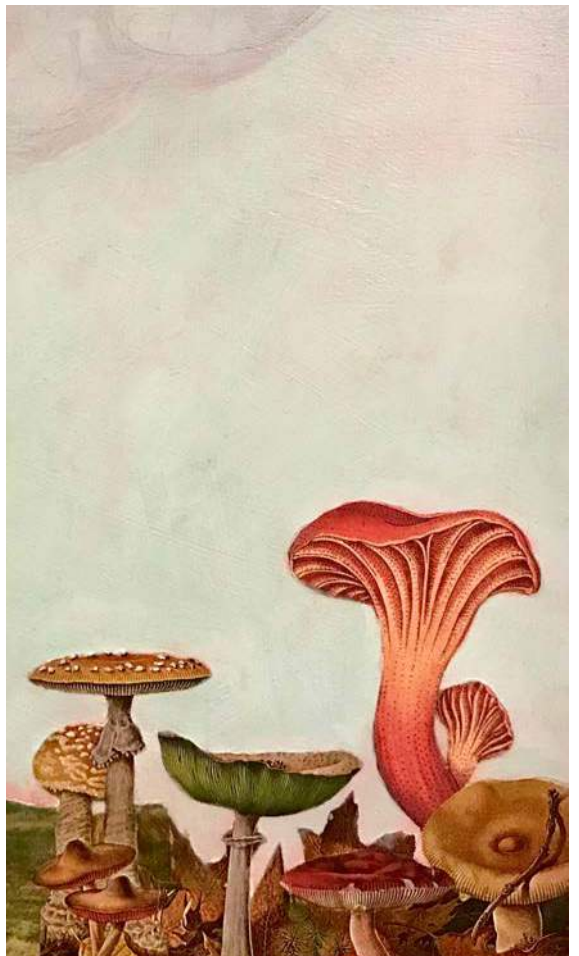
Reflect on the process that Holly Roberts highlights in her artist statement, and try it yourself!

Begin with a blank canvas, paper or panel. Use paints, markers or pastels to create an abstract image that covers the entire area you are working with.

Allow that image to spark your imagination! What emotions do you feel when viewing the abstract image? How could you build on those emotions with images? How might you tell a story of the emotions you feel with images/collage?

Using bits of photos you've taken, photos from your family archive, or found images (from magazines, antique stores, etc.) build a scene on top of the original abstract image. When you're happy with your composition, you can glue them down or keep them loose to rearrange later!

To access a free online collage making tool, [click here.](#)

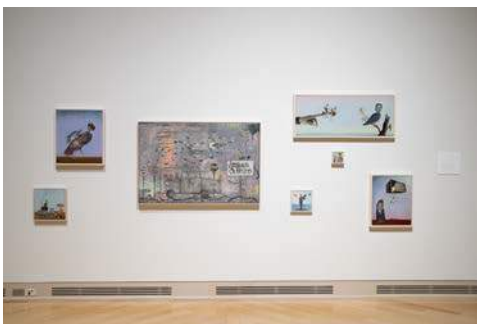


BEHIND THE SCENES

**A CLOSE LOOK AT THE INSTALLATION OF
*FICTIVE STRATEGIES***

TO VIEW MORE
PLEASE VISIT OUR [FLICKR PAGE](#) HERE





FICTIVE STRATEGIES

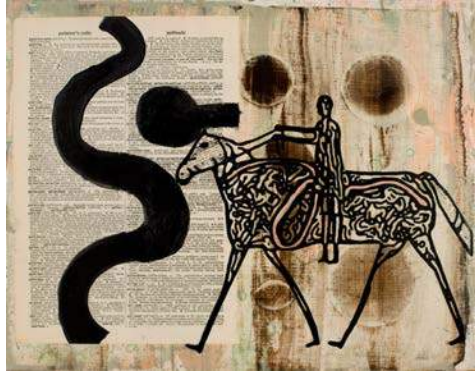
Holly Roberts

[Installation Images - TCVA flickr](#)

[Gallery Walk Through Video](#)



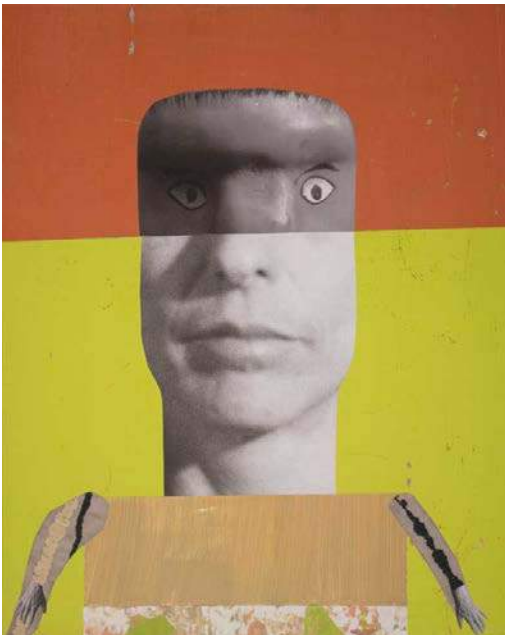
Holly Roberts
Gray Man, 2013
Mixed media on panel



Holly Roberts
Snake Rider III, 2019
Mixed media on panel



Holly Roberts
Road Closed, 2007
Mixed media on panel



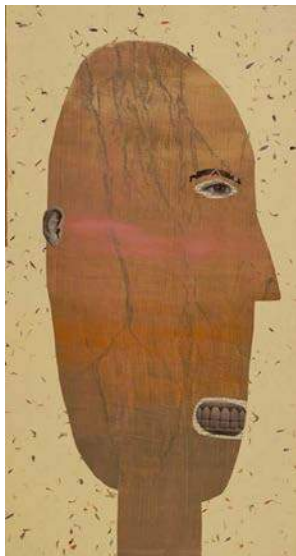
Holly Roberts
Young Man Watching, 2016
Mixed media on panel



Holly Roberts
Woman Flying, 2019
Mixed media on panel

FICTIVE STRATEGIES

Holly Roberts



Holly Roberts
Big Head Listening,
2014
Mixed media on panel



Holly Roberts
Big Head Thinking,
2017
Mixed media on panel



Holly Roberts
Couple Reaching, 2019
Mixed media on panel



Holly Roberts
Girl Being Surprised, 2017
Mixed media on panel



Holly Roberts
Mother in Her Garden, 2018
Mixed media on panel

FICTIVE STRATEGIES

Suzanne Sbarge



Suzanne Sbarge
Construct, 2019
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarge
Wheels Turning, 2015
Oil & collage on panel



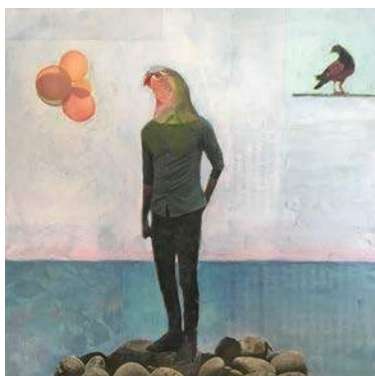
Suzanne Sbarge
Halo, 2019
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarge
Hush, 2016
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarge
Point, 2019
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarge
Island II, 2019
Oil & collage on panel



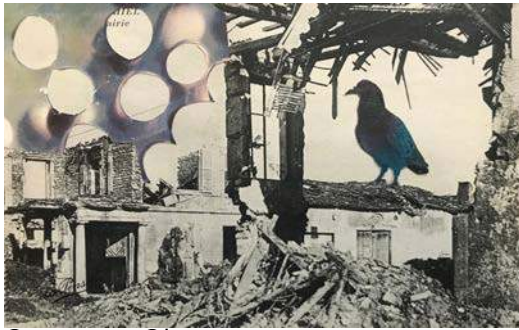
Suzanne Sbarge
Poisonous Mushrooms, 2019
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarge
Reconstruction I, 2019
Collage on vintage postcard

FICTIVE STRATEGIES

Suzanne Sbarga



Suzanne Sbarga
Reconstruction II, 2019
Collage on vintage postcard



Suzanne Sbarga
Reconstruction III, 2019
Collage on vintage postcard



Suzanne Sbarga
Wild Turkey, 2017
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarga
Shower, 2019
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarga
Blue Jay, 2017
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarga
Bugle, 2017
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarga
Cactus Flower, 2017
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarga
Cape, 2017
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarga
Fish Head, 2017
Collage on found photograph

FICTIVE STRATEGIES

Suzanne Sbarge



Suzanne Sbarge
Sea Bird II, 2017
Collage on found photograph



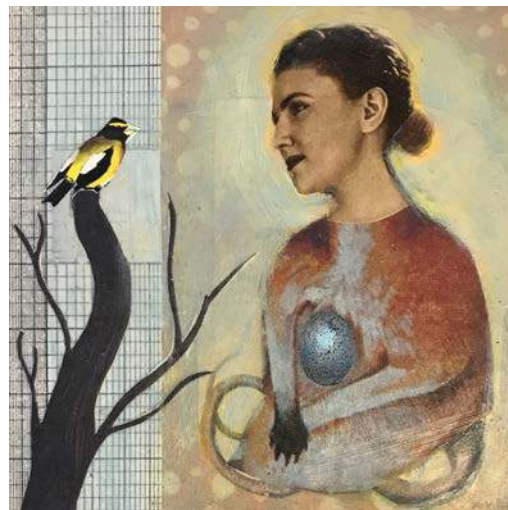
Suzanne Sbarge
Monkeys, 2017
Collage on found photograph



Suzanne Sbarge
Hat, 2017
Oil and collage on paper



Suzanne Sbarge
Conversation, 2003
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarge
Yellow Bird, 2017
Oil & collage on panel



Suzanne Sbarge
Box Car, 2019
Oil & collage on panel



THANK YOU

FROM THE TURCHIN CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

The Turchin Center for the Visual Arts at Appalachian State University engages visitors from the university, community, nation and beyond in creating unique experiences through dynamic and accessible exhibition, education, outreach and collection programs. These programs inspire and support a lifelong engagement with the visual arts and create opportunities for participants to learn more about themselves and the world around them.

SHARE YOUR WORK WITH US AT #TCVAATHOME !

