

## **Bennington College's Visual Arts Lecture Series Highlights Role of Place and Belonging in Contemporary Art and its Making**

**Bennington, VT:** Bennington College's Fall 2019 [Visual Arts Lecture Series \(VALS\)](#) centers on the theme "Indigeneity, Subjectivity, and Medium in Contemporary Art" with lectures from **Cosmo Whyte '05**, **Terran Last Gun**, **Genevieve Gaignard**, **ERRE**, **Candice Hopkins**, and **Sara Emsaki**.

All lectures are free, open to the public, and will take place from **7:00 - 8:30 PM** in **Tishman Lecture Hall** on the College's [campus](#).

Each term, VALS offers lectures by visiting arts professionals: artists, curators, historians and critics, selected to showcase the diversity of contemporary art practices. VALS features artists who have remained pioneering and original for decades, as well as younger makers who are newly gathering international attention.

"This is an important time to think about what contemporary art and those who interpret it can contribute to a conversation about how people relate to the places we come from, live in, and are sometimes forced to leave or made to inhabit," said Visual Arts faculty member [Vanessa Lyon](#), Professor of Art History and Director of VALS. "Learning about how art is made, of what—its medium—and where, are all important ways to understand what we see."

On [Tuesday, September 17](#), VALS welcomes **Cosmo Whyte '05**, a Jamaican-born transdisciplinary artist. His practice includes drawing, performance, and sculpture, and "explores how notions of identity are disrupted by migration."

On [Tuesday, September 24](#), New Mexico-based printmaker **Terran Last Gun** will speak about his work, which uses geometric abstraction and color field aesthetics to depict pre-American landscapes and engage with his Blackfoot ancestry.

On [Tuesday, October 1](#), **Genevieve Gaignard**, a photographer and installation artist, will discuss her work, which "play[s] with the outward signifiers and stereotypes of race, class, and femininity, combining and remixing them into sometimes exaggerated but steadily ambiguous costumes."

On [Tuesday, October 8](#), VALS welcomes **ERRE**, a multidisciplinary artist known for his site-specific installations, including *Toy an Horse*, a monumental replica of the Trojan Horse that was [installed](#) at the United States/Mexico border checkpoint in San Ysidro "to stimulate discussion about the border, invasion, cultural exchange, and dependency."

On [Tuesday, November 12](#), independent curator and writer **Candice Hopkins** will speak on her work, which focuses on art and indigeneity. Originally from Whitehorse, Yukon, Hopkins is a citizen of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. She is currently senior curator of the inaugural Toronto Biennial of Art (2019).

On [Tuesday, December 3](#), VALS concludes with **Sara Emsaki**, a painter and printmaker who lives and works between the United States and Iran. Her work "interrogates the multiple roles and codes individuals embody at the intersection of contrasting religious, cultural and aesthetic traditions."

### **About the Lecturers**

[Sara Emsaki](#) (b. 1989) is a painter and printmaker who lives and works between the United States and Iran. Her work "interrogates the multiple roles and codes individuals embody at the intersection of contrasting religious, cultural and aesthetic traditions." Emsaki is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley and an MFA candidate in Painting and Printmaking at the Yale School of Art. At Berkeley, Emsaki was a recipient of the Eisner Prize—the highest achievement in the creative arts—and the Wendy Sussman Prize in painting. Group exhibitions

include SOMArts Cultural Center and Root Division in San Francisco, and Sola Art Gallery in Los Angeles.

**ERRE** (Marcos Ramírez) (b. 1971) is a multidisciplinary artist known for his site-specific installations. Born in Tijuana, Ramirez obtained a law degree before immigrating to the United States where he worked in the construction industry for almost twenty years. Concurrently, he began working as a visual artist and, in 1997, collaborated on a monumental replica of the Trojan Horse, entitled *Toy an Horse*. It was [installed](#) at the United States/Mexico border checkpoint in San Ysidro “to stimulate discussion about the border, invasion, cultural exchange, and dependency.” Since then, his work has been included in many major exhibitions worldwide, including the 2000 Whitney Biennial, the fifth and sixth Havana Biennials, the 2007 São Paulo/Valencia Biennial, and the second Moscow Biennial. ERRE’s solo exhibition: *Them and Us/Ellos y Nosotros* opened at MassMoCA in August, 2019.

**Genevieve Gagnard** (b. 1981) is a photographer and installation artist. Based in Los Angeles, Gagnard’s [work](#) “play[s] with the outward signifiers and stereotypes of race, class, and femininity, combining and remixing them into sometimes exaggerated but steadily ambiguous costumes.” Often through self-portraiture, Gagnard examines and disrupts assumptions about cultural identity, while embodying aesthetics of kitsch and provocation. Gagnard received an MFA in photography from Yale University and a BFA in Photography from Massachusetts College of Art. Notable group exhibitions include the Studio Museum in Harlem and the FLAG Art Foundation, with solo shows at MASS MoCA, the Houston Center for Photography, and Vielmetter, Los Angeles.

**Candice Hopkins** (b. 1977) is an independent curator and writer whose work focuses on art and indigeneity. Originally from Whitehorse, Yukon, Hopkins is a citizen of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. In 2018, Hopkins was co-curator of the SITElines Biennial in New Mexico. She is currently senior curator of the inaugural Toronto Biennial of Art (2019). Hopkins was co-curator of Canada’s pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennale, and a curatorial advisor for the fourteenth Documenta in Kassel, Germany. A graduate of the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Hopkins has been widely published and has received awards including the Hnatyshyn Foundation Award for Curatorial Excellence in Contemporary Art and the 2016 Prix pour un essai critique sur l’art contemporain by the Foundation Prince Pierre de Monaco.

**Terran Last Gun** (b. 1989) is a New Mexico-based printmaker. Primarily using serigraphy, Last Gun’s prints use geometric abstraction and color field aesthetics to [depict](#) pre-American landscapes and engage with his Blackfoot ancestry. Last Gun holds an AS from Blackfeet Community College, a BFA in Museum Studies, and an AFA in Studio Arts from the Institute of American Indian Arts. He was a 2017 artist-in-residence at the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Group exhibitions include Rainmaker Gallery in Bristol, UK (2019) and the Santa Fe Art Institute (2018).

**Cosmo Whyte '05** (b. 1982) is a Jamaican-born transdisciplinary artist. His practice includes drawing, performance, and sculpture, and “explores how notions of identity are disrupted by migration.” Whyte holds a BA from Bennington College, a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate from Maryland Institute College of Art, and an MFA From the University of Michigan. His work has been shown in exhibitions around the world, including the 2017 Jamaica Biennial, and the 2016 Atlanta Biennial. He is a recipient of the International Sculpture Center’s Outstanding Student Achievement in Contemporary Sculpture Award (2015) and an Artadia Award (2016). Whyte is currently based in Atlanta, Georgia, and Montego Bay. He teaches art practice at Morehouse College.

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**BENNINGTON COLLEGE**

Bennington College is a liberal arts college in southwestern Vermont that distinguished itself early as a vanguard institution within American higher education. It was the first to include the visual and performing arts in a liberal arts education, and to integrate work in the classroom with work in the field. The College aims to educate students towards self-fulfillment and constructive social purposes in an increasingly complex global society. Bennington believes that equity, diversity, and inclusivity—in community and in curriculum—are vital to achieving those aims. Bennington's distinguished visual arts alumni have shaped the field in every way, as artists, curators, dealers, critics, and gallerists. Some of its notable alumni include Helen Frankenthaler '49, Kathy Halbreich '71, Sally Mann '73, Dan Cameron '79, Holly Block '80, Carrie Moyer '82, Matthew Marks '85, Andrea Fiuczynski '85, Tom Sachs '89, Odili Donald Odita MFA '90, and Anna Gaskell '92. Learn more at [bennington.edu](https://bennington.edu).

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