RISE.
This catalogue accompanies the exhibition “RISE.”, on view at The Walsh Gallery.

September 5 - September 29, 2017

All images contained in this catalogue are courtesy of the artists unless otherwise noted.

All measurements are provided in inches, height by width.

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Walsh Gallery
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www.shu.edu/walshgallery
Patricia Cazorla & Nancy Saleme
Scherezade Garcia
Mona Saeed Kamal
Käthe Kollwitz
Diana Kurz
Hayoon Jay Lee
jc lenochan
Liliya Lifanova
Alen MacWeeney
Gregory Sholette
Peter Turnley

Curated by Emily Brostek & Claudia Preza

September 5 - 29, 2017
Walsh Gallery at Seton Hall University
A Contemporary Experience of the Human Condition Influenced by Käthe Kollwitz

The human condition collectively refers to what makes us human - events, characteristics, and surroundings that compose our existence. We all are different but we often experience similar situations as people around the world. Many of these circumstances transcend time and borders. Though the term human condition is used to describe a vast array of situations, RISE. specifically focuses on the narrative of conflict, emotionality and aspiration.

Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945) was a German Expressionist artist who used her art as a form of activism that echoed events experienced throughout her life such as revolts against the hierarchy and the fight for workers’ rights. *Outbreak from Bauernkrieg*, the catalyst from which RISE. was conceptualized, is Kollwitz’s iconic print depicting a revolt led by Black Anna during the Peasants’ War of Germany in the 1500s. The conflict consisted of a series of revolts by common citizens seeking freedom from the class hierarchy in place at that time. Kollwitz’s etching not only depicts the struggle and determination of a people, but functions metaphorically in the context of the exhibition to show the transcendence of similar hardships over time. By juxtaposing this early 20th century work with contemporary art, commonalities emerge via themes and emotions related to conflict that are still abundant in our time.

Drawing inspiration from Kollwitz’s depiction of suffering and reaction to social oppression, this exhibition seeks to minimize the perceived gap across countries and humanity. By bringing together a variety of artworks, we can see various points of view that come from artists of different backgrounds, but reflect a variety of shared issues/concerns by exploring themes of labor and/or class. Each artist draws connections from personal experiences, as well as past and present events, and sheds light on these issues by incorporating a sense of hope, showing how empowerment can overcome adversity.

Collaborative duo Patricia Cazorla and Nancy Saleme pay tribute to the working class by emphasizing wealth disparity in *Defence*. The installation is a comparative visual analysis of migrant workers and the wealthy, with an ornate dining table set against a backdrop of laborers toiling in a field. The installation reminds one of the gap between the working and upper classes but also reinforces the connection that exists between them through food and the efforts of those who made this feast possible.

Through *Theories of Freedom: Golden Landscape*, artist Scherezade Garcia seeks to understand freedom with inspiring stories documenting immigrant experiences. By including the imagery of waves, Garcia highlights how the ocean carries dual narratives of freedom and oppression. Speaking specifically to overseas migration, this installation shows the different situations one can encounter when migrating; being fortunate enough to fly and relocate (represented by airport tags with their intended destination, the ‘land of the free’) or being forced by hardships to become refugees and risk one’s life (represented by the inner tubes symbolizing the scarce
resources available to immigrants and the frightening reality of their means of migration.)

*Alluring Friction* is the product of Mona Saeed Kamal’s familial ties with the Indian subcontinent, Algeria and modern issues plaguing the area. In 2013 Kamal travelled to India and filmed *Border Crossing*, in which she documented her journey crossing the border from Pakistan to India. Inspired by this work and the concept of borders, *Alluring Friction* addresses the similarities of both cultures despite ongoing border conflicts between the two nations. *Alluring Friction* incorporates a charpoy, a traditional Indian woven bed, which uses barbed wire instead of rope to simulate conflict between the countries. Kamal addresses discrimination, ethnicity, and class struggle through her art to reflect not only her own experiences, but the cultural narratives of those with similar migratory upbringings.

Diana Kurz paints individual portraits of people that inspire her. These portraits are the result of working with colleagues, friends, and newcomers she has encountered throughout her life. Only after completing a large number of portraits did her vision to show the commonalities among this diverse group of people come to fruition. There is no formal title for the paintings as a group because Kurz views them as individuals and believes that it is important to identify each of her subjects as distinct, yet similar entities. Kurz’s portraits signify the humanity affected by and involved in the issues presented in *RISE*.

The installation *One Breath - 310* draws inspiration from Hayoon Jay Lee’s South Korean heritage. Lee uses rice to address the issue of world hunger. Rice, a staple of the Korean diet, is manipulated into bowls that are displayed in a large quantity. For this project, Lee’s artistic process involved a fast for three days to understand the desperate and all-consuming nature of hunger. *One Breath - 310* draws upon the disparity in how we see food. To some, the bowls are empty vessels, while to others, the rice bowls’ intrinsic value as nourishment is paramount to those who may be in a state of desperation and hunger.

Artist jc lenochan uses books to address socio-political conditions in his site-specific piece, *a tribute to the outbreak of a monumental collapse for justice*. His selection of books with titles that allude to content of social disparity, race and gender struggles, art and current events - investigate how words can have an impact on audiences and culture. lenochan wants the titles to spark conversations that address perceptions of the included titles and subjects.

Through *Untitled (cheval de frise)*, artist Liliya Lifanova articulates how adversity can succeed against oppression. The cheval de frise are traditional military barriers dating to the Middle Ages, and were popular forms of barricades used in trenches during both World Wars. Lifanova uses them as a symbol of resistance and opposition, while sharply bisecting the gallery, but she has also included an intended weakness that renders the fortification an irony; the pieces are made from ceramic - a fragile medium whose components must reach an equilibrium or they will collapse on themselves.

*Bernie Ward, Cherry Orchard, Dublin* by Alen MacWeeney offers a more direct and simple portrayal of social conditions by capturing the innocence of a young Irish Traveller boy. The playfulness of the child obscures his
nomad life and possible hardships faced living in poverty and being dispossessed, something that MacWeeney has compared to the struggles faced by migrant farmers during the American Depression. Though such a morose background surrounds Bernie’s story, the photograph highlights the hope that is abundant even though harsh conditions are faced.

Gregory Sholette draws inspiration from his own activism and involvement in the art world. Often inspired by photographs taken while participating in interventions and protests, both *Gulf/Global Ultra Luxury Faction* and *Occupy Museums: Pergamon Alter* stem from his political action. In 2015, Sholette occupied The Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice to protest for labor rights of workers employed by the Louvre and Guggenheim expansions in Abu Dhabi. *Museums: Pergamon Alter* was created in response to the occupation at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. Sholette’s *DARKER* series, of which both works are a part, references the historical novel of Peter Weiss, *The Aesthetics of Resistance (Die Ästhetik des Widerstands)*, which reflects on the tumultuous status of the United States’ resources available to immigrants and the frightening reality of their means of migration.

Photographer, Peter Turnley is concerned in the human condition, specifically the plight and suffering of the poor. Throughout his career, he has travelled globally to war torn areas and captured moments where extreme situations can highlight the resilience and strength of a people. Turnley’s photographs were taken in Iraq, Turkey, Albania, Croatia, and California, and in each, his inspiration comes from those who do not define themselves by possessions, but rather through their actions and behaviors as humans. Turnley’s photographs capture individuals in a way that asserts their humanity amidst the inhumane conditions of their current situations.

Throughout this exhibition, the artworks included depict or respond to social injustice and the battle against adversity that transcends geography and time. *Outbreak from Bauernkrieg* serves as an example of the power art can provide during times of struggle. Not only does the show connect humans around the globe, but it demonstrates how human suffering is epidemic and timeless. However, taking lead from Kollwitz, artists can still take comfort in exploiting their talents to address hardship, conflict and turmoil in hopes of affecting a vast audience. *RISE* takes place in an ever changing and contentious world. Through this show, we reflect on the topics depicted here and in the spirit of Kollwitz’s *Outbreak from Bauernkrieg*, ponder the trials we face; trials where we are tested the most, and rise.

- Emily Brostek & Claudia Preza
Patricia Cazorla & Nancy Saleme.

DeFence
charcoal pencil, ink, permanent markers, liquid silver leaf and acrylic on hand-made wooden fence.
dimensions variable
2016
Scherezade Garcia.

*Theories of Freedom: Golden Landscape*

inner tubes in a variety of sizes
dipped in gold paint (sprayed), blue acrylic,
safety ties and airport tags
dimensions variable
2010-17
Mona Saeed Kamal.

Alluring Friction
reclaimed wood and spray painted barbed wire
6’ x 3’ x 2’
2013
Diana Kurz.

Top Row:
Josh
Grace
Carl
Sarah

2nd row:
Alessandro
Hiroya
Vlad
Jennifer

3rd row:
Eunice
Christine
Andrew
Kevin

Bottom row:
Natassa
Latrice
Johnny
Matt

oil on canvas
14”x 12”
2005 - 2016
One Breath – 310
cooked rice, gel medium, natural resin
dimensions variable
2011-2017
jc lenochan.

a tribute to the outbreak of a monumental collapse for justice
books
9'11" x 13"
1970 present
Liliya Lifanova.

Untitled (cheval de frise)
Ed. 20 (+1 A.P. + 4 H.C.)
ceramic
9 ¼” x 9 ¼” x 9 ¼”
2015
Gregory Sholette.

Occupy Museums: Pergamon Alter, Berlin
ink wash, acrylic, paper
35 ½” x 23 ½”
2016