

Accent Sisters | Group Show

What If We Lose the Ground

February 8 – February 25, 2024

On view Thursday - Sunday, 12 am – 5 pm

Accent Sisters, 157A First Street, Studio 206, Jersey City, NJ

Artists: Janine Brown, Lisa Lee Freeman, Maria Markham, Melanie Brewster, Nayven Vignette, Shuai Yang, Youyi Echo Yan

Curated by Yuyue (Eunice) Chen

Opening Reception: Thursday, February 8, 2024, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Accent Sisters is pleased to present *What If We Lose the Ground*, curated by Yuyue (Eunice) Chen. *What If We Lose the Ground* brings works of prints, collages, sculptures, and videos by artists Janine Brown, Lisa Lee Freeman, Maria Markham, Melanie Brewster, Nayven Vignette, Shuai Yang, and Youyi Echo Yan.

Imagine your body floating, falling, and swirling in mid-air; the lines of the horizon you see would break up, twirl around, and superimpose. Traditional modes of seeing and feeling are shattered. As Hito Steyerl wrote in *In Free Fall: Thought Experiments in Vertical Perspective*, “We cannot assume any stable ground on which to base metaphysical claims or foundational political myths. At best, we are faced with temporary, contingent, and partial attempts at grounding.”

What If We Lose the Ground presents a new approach to understanding the body's navigation, expanding the perception of spatial and experiential dimensions. By positioning the body as a reference point, the artists construct a coordinate system that mediates material and spiritual realm. Through techniques such as kitchen witchcraft, mapmaking, and digital visualization, the featured artworks explore the reflections of visibility and domesticated space, female body and mythical images, as well as legacy and digital technologies. The exhibition is not only about the transformation of physical form but encompasses the full spectrum of life's uncertainties, from cosmological phenomena to social dynamics.

In the trajectory of human evolution from crawling to upright dominance, Youyi Echo Yan's video installation offers an immersive exploration into the marriage of death, desire, and the vertical evolution of the human form. The piece navigates the axes of existence, intertwining the past, present, and speculative future.

Janine Brown retreats to a form of kitchen-witchery by returning to the science-based origins of home economics in her work. Experimenting with various recipes, Brown harnesses the power of domestic science to cook biodegradable rubber using ingredients from her pantry embedded with financial statements and U.S.

currency residue. The body of work suggests the potential for freedom from the constraints of beauty standards, myths of women in the domestic space, and capitalism.

Using her body as the center and personal cognitive and perceptive space as the radius, Shuai Yang attempts to find the relationships between her body, spirituality, and the universe through visual experiments. Fascinated by the idea that a woman's menstruation is influenced by the moon, she senses a connection between herself and the cosmic realm. Within her showcased works, *Ecliptic* and *Galactic*, she overlays multi-limbed and multi-eyed characters onto astronomical coordinates, using her own physical presence as the observational standpoint. Through these practices, she tries to understand why humans seek connections with the cosmic realm and how the body and emotions are associated with it.

Reimagining the mythology of the Lupa Capitolina—the famous she-wolf who nursed Remus and Romulus, founders of ancient Rome—Melanie Brewster uses collage and fiber to create scenes of transformation: women to wolves and wolves to women. Her work addresses themes of rebellion, maternal instincts, and child freedom, posing questions about the tension between freely offering caregiving and refusing to nourish others.

Featured artists also work with natural and biological evolutions from the digital, with spiritual returns to surreal nature in the flight from technological oversaturation. Maria Markham provokes thought on the nature of the technological legacy we are creating amidst groundless lands. Her work *Stigmatised (Transhuman)* reflects the impact of technology on our physical and spiritual existence. The transhuman body, immersed in the waves of technology, is marked by stigmata that represent the human quest for orientation of both mystical and tangible worlds.

Nayven Vignette's glitchy creatures are transformed by the legacy of our digital dichotomy in a speculative projection of the material consequences to our present, immaterial lives. In their work, *Effervescent Obsolescence* explores and imagines a post-human future haunted by fossilized ghosts of our marginalized blind spots. What will our human legacy be when our data is gone?

Finally, Lisa Lee Freeman's map-inspired art is about navigating uncertainty in a chaotic world. It explodes traditional male cartographic representations of reality to make turbulent psychological landscapes visible. In her art practice, the map is the territory of the self, unmoored, fractured, and warped by the vagaries of life bashing up against a riptide of existential crises. Freeman is interested in the power of disorder and disorientation to disrupt the status quo and create a sense of urgency and agency in the scramble to get reoriented and find new ways forward.

Artists Biographies

Janine Brown (Belmond, Iowa) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Southern Connecticut and New York City. Her work is informed by her experience as a fashion designer from the Midwest and her experience in the domestic space as a female and mother. She draws on these experiences to question ideas and stereotypes of people, places, and things. Brown's solo shows include an upcoming 2024 show at Silvermine Galleries (Connecticut), and past shows at Moorpark College Art Gallery (California); Gallery 825 (California); and the Westport Arts Center (Connecticut). Group exhibitions include "Public|Private" and "New Artifacts" at the SVA Flatiron Gallery (New York City, NY); "Tra 2 Mari" at the Museo Area Archeologica Arte Contemporanea (Cisternino, Italy -work in the permanent collection); "TenWomen" at Marie Baldwin Gallery (California); and "How We See Her" at the Foundry Art Center (Missouri). A graduate of Iowa State University, the Fashion Institute of Technology, and New York University's Stern School of Business, Brown is currently a Master of Fine Arts candidate in the School of Visual Arts Art Practice program. She maintains a studio in the America Fabrics Arts Building in Bridgeport, CT. To learn more about her work visit www.janinebrownstudio.com or [@janinebrownstudio](https://www.instagram.com/janinebrownstudio) on Instagram.

Melanie Elyse Brewster (Miami, Florida) lives and works in New York City. Brewster's interdisciplinary art and scholarship focuses on how women and marginalized communities cope with stress and stigma. Her 2D and 3D works address the peculiarities of spirituality under late-stage capitalism and create faux 'wellness' practices via fiber, collage, and assemblage. Playing with the idea of 'spiritual drag' by using irreverent, over-the-top methods, she explores the effort it takes to ameliorate pain and stay grounded. Brewster's work is informed by both surrealism and camp aesthetics that center kitsch, costume, and craft to destabilize and queer identity. Through this lens, she builds strangely magical worlds—vulnerable and darkly humorous—wherein her mythological subjects try to stay resilient in the face of oppression. Brewster's art has been exhibited across the US and in the UK (i.Wailoa Arts Center in Hilo, Hawaii; Arts Warehouse in Delray Beach, Florida; SVA Flatiron Gallery in Manhattan) and juried fairs (i.e., Future Fair in Chelsea, Beehive Bazaar in Salt Lake City). She has also worked with independent boutiques throughout the US for her upcycled jewelry designs. To learn more about her work please visit www.melaniebrewster.com.

Lisa Lee Freeman is a New York-based visual artist. Her abstract, cartographic art explores the challenge of navigating uncertainty in a chaotic world. Inspired by her journalism background, she uses mapping and charting techniques to generate narratives about coping with the entangled vagaries of life—relationships, mortality, and identity—and global economic, environmental, and political crises. Freeman is interested in how the language of maps and other forms of data visualization can operate as a tool for storytelling and self-expression when freed from the constraints of digital frameworks. She uses ink pours and a mix of painting, drawing, and collage to create her works on paper and other materials. Freeman earned her MFA at the School of Visual Arts in 2022 after attending an SVA residency. She has participated in numerous group shows and is a member of the Silvermine Guild of Artists.

Maria Markham's artistic practice is amplified by over 30 years work in the nonprofit sector with diverse groups and communities as a facilitator, program developer, executive director and strategist. Primary preoccupations in Maria Markham's work include the Anthropocene and the failures of capitalism causing the climate crisis and global economic inequities and instabilities. Markham is interested in the change from the digital to the psychopolitical system replete with the imbalanced power structures and socio-cultural anxieties and upheavals that mark contemporary life. Working primarily in multi-media, installation, and video montage, Markham is also interested in interrogating what we carry unbeknownst to us within our souls, psyches and bodies. Markham centers these concerns in the body because this is our most fundamental starting place. As an immigrant, Markham is deeply curious about movements and evolutions of people, animals, plants and places through space and time. These curiosities have led her to create with other species and consider alternate temporalities and futurisms. Her work explores being and becoming in multimedia that includes sculpture, fiber, drawing, video, and writing, asking the viewer to think about what is and what might be possible. She is now completing an MFA in Art Practice at the School for Visual Arts (SVA) in New York. Her work was recently featured in online exhibits at The Alternative Art School and SVA.

Nayven Vignette is a Brooklyn, NY, based digital artist practicing the procedural generation of meaningful sound, image, and animation. They have been creating unique sonic experiences since 1997, including several generative and interactive installations which were shown at University of Maine between 2011-2014. In 2019, Nayven began focusing on integrating visual aesthetics into their practice, including painting, sculpture, 3D modeling, and video. Nayven's work often addresses various oppressive shortcomings of current social and political structures. They are driven by a philosophical connection between their own disjointed experience of reality and the aspects of the world that cause people to be unjustly amputated from agency in their own realities. Nayven received their Master's of Fine Art from the School of Visual Art in New York City in 2021.

Youyi Echo Yan (Chongqing, China) Lives and works in New York City. Currently she is pursuing a degree in Studio Art at New York University. Her recent exhibitions include: A Happy Beginning, at LATITUDE Gallery, New York, 2023. Genesis: A New Generation of Chinese Artists, at Chambers Fine Art, 2023, Mold-ing, with Stilllife, at 216 Lafayette St, New York, 2023. Mycelia, at Commons Gallery, 34 Stuyvesant St, New York, 2023. Nature v.s. Nurture, at 80WSE Gallery, 80 Washington Square E, New York, NY 10003, 2023. Werewolf/Ferryman (Relic), at Commons Gallery, 34 Stuyvesant St, New York, 2022. Island of Light, at 559 W 23rd Street, New York, 2022.

Shuai Yang (Beijing, China) is an interdisciplinary artist who works across painting, printmaking, drawing, installation, and performance to question humans' bodily and spiritual relationship to the universe. She builds her visual, material, and curatorial system upon mathematical aesthetics and printmaking concepts. Yang has exhibited her work at Chambers Fine Arts, New York; Storage Gallery, New York; LATITUDE Gallery, New York; Fredric Snitzer Gallery, Miami; Abigail Ogilvy, Los Angeles; Lenfest Center For The Arts, New York; Society of Arts and Crafts, Boston, and elsewhere. Her work is in the collection of Hudson River Museum, NY. She is a recipient of the Rockella Artist Program fellowship, Morty Frank Travel Award and Donald C. Kelley

Travel Award. Yang recently received her MFA in Visual Arts from Columbia University School of The Arts and a BFA in printmaking from Massachusetts College of Art.

Curators Biography

Eunice Chen Yuyue (Chongqing, China) is a curator based in New York City. She completed her M.A. in Curatorial Practice at the School of Visual Arts in New York in 2023. Previously, she received her B.S. in Accounting from Chongqing University and her M.M. in Accounting and Finance from the University of Melbourne. In 2022, she interned as a curatorial assistant at Bergen Assembly 2022 in Norway. She has previously worked at the LUXELAKES A4 Art Museum in Chengdu, the Zhejiang Art Museum in Hangzhou, and TEDxCQU 2016 in Chongqing. In her curatorial practice, she is concerned about mobility labor, memory in migration and diaspora, and environmental injustice. Her exhibitions focus on how artists engage with global and local audiences through new media art in public discourses.

Accent Sisters Speakeasy Bookstore and Gallery

Accent Sisters: Speakeasy Bookstore and Gallery, based not in New York, serve female and LGBTQ community. We love text-related, narrative-driven, cross media work made by Asian female and queer artists.

重音社/Accent Sisters, 位于纽约的双语文学艺术工作室和亚文化空间, 致力于面向公众而介入当下, 以流动的形态聚合海外与中国本土的写作者、研究者、跨媒介创作者, 并通过双语工作坊、国际出版、驻留、艺术展览等形式, 促成跨越国界与学科壁垒的创作交流, 并尝试在这一行动者网络下探索亲缘性联结的别样可能。



Accent Sisters | 群展

如果, 地面消失

参展艺术家: 玛丽亚·马卡姆 / 梅兰妮·布鲁斯特 / 丽莎·李·弗里曼 / 奈文·维涅特 / 杨帅 / 阎悠逸 / 珍妮·布朗

策展人: 陈余悦

展期: 2024/2/8 – 2024/2/25, 周四至周日 12 – 5 pm

开幕酒会: 2024/2/8, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

157A First Street, Studio 206, Jersey City, NJ

如果地面消失, 你的身体在空中漂浮、坠落、或旋转, 你看到水平线变得破碎、扭曲或重叠, 传统的观看和感知模式被彻底打破, 线性透视不复存在。就像黑特·史特耶尔在《自由落体: 垂直观角的思想实验》一文中写道, “我们不能假设任何稳定的地面用以承载形而上的主张或奠基性的政治神话。充其量, 我们面临的是暂时的、偶然的、部分的触地尝试。”

展览“如果, 地面消失”提出一种用身体导航, 探索时空的新方式。艺术家将身体作为参照点, 建立融合现实与精神的坐标系。艺术作品通过厨房巫术、地图制作和数字可视化等不同技术媒介, 衡量被驯化的家庭空间, 诠释女性身体和神话图像的关联, 同时也探讨未来科技的不确定性。展览不仅涉及物质形态的转变, 还涵盖了从宇宙现象到社会动态中的各种不确定性。

阎悠逸的影像装置以人类从爬行到直立统治的进化历程为背景, 将死亡、欲望与人体的垂直进化相结合。作品通过推测z轴的演变, 表现人类进化史对空间塑造的可能影响。珍妮·布朗在她的作品中探索了家政学的科学根源, 并将其与一种厨房里的魔法艺术相结合。布朗通过尝试多样化的独特食谱, 运用日常家务的原则, 在她的食品储藏室里烹饪出一种独特的佳肴: 包含财务报表和美元碎片的可生物降解橡胶。她的创作跨越了传统美学的界限, 展现女性打破在家庭中的完美形象和限制资本主义的可能性。

杨帅以身体为中心, 以个人认知感知空间为半径, 试图通过视觉实验来寻找身体、精神与宇宙之间的关系。她对女性的月经受月亮影响的想法着迷, 感觉到自己与宇宙领域之间的联系。在她展示的作品《黄道》和《银河》中, 她将她自己的身体存在作为观察点, 将多肢和多眼的人物叠加到天文坐标上。通过这些实践, 艺术家试图探索为什么人类寻求与宇宙星群的联系, 以及身体和情感如何相关。

梅兰妮·布鲁斯特 (Melanie Brewster) 重新诠释了卢帕·卡皮托利纳 (Lupa Capitolina) 的神话, 该神话讲述一只母狼养育古罗马创始人雷穆斯 (Remus) 和罗穆卢斯 (Romulus)。布鲁斯特使用拼贴画和纤维艺术创造出变形转换的场景: 女性化为狼, 狼化为女性。她的作品探讨叛逆、母性本能和儿童自由等主题, 表现对自由提供关爱和拒绝抚养之间的张力。

在逃离技术过度饱和的过程中，人们的精神逐渐回归到一种超现实的自然状态。玛丽亚·马卡姆(Maria Markham)的作品Stigmatised (Transhuman) 思考技术对人类身体和精神存在的影响。沉浸在技术潮流中的超人类身体，代表着人类在神秘宇宙论中的寻求方向。马卡姆引发了人们对我们在不稳定土地上创造的技术遗产的思考。

奈文·维涅特(Vignette)的故障生物受到数字二元性遗产的影响，对我们当前无形的物质后果进行推测性预想。在他们的作品中，作品“泡腾过时”探索并想象了一种后人类未来：人们被边缘化盲点的化石幽灵所困扰。当我们的数据消失后，人类将会留下什么？

最后，丽莎·李·弗里曼以地图为灵感，描绘混沌世界中的不确定性。它打破了传统的男性制图对现实的描绘，使动荡的心理景观变得显现。在她的艺术实践中，地图是自我的领地，由于变幻莫测的生活与危机的激流相撞而变得无处安放、破碎和扭曲。弗里曼对混乱和迷失方向的力量着迷，这种力量能够会破坏现状，在寻找新的方向和前进道路的过程中，创造出紧迫感和行动力。