

Playbook: A Selection of Work from the MFA Programs at Boston University and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Organized by Josephine Halvorson and Didier William

On Stellar Rays

213 Bowery, New York, NY

June 30 – July 9, 2017. Opening reception Friday June 30, 6-8pm.



Images: Erin Kerbert (L), Emmitt Smith (R)

Didier William and Josephine Halvorson, artists, professors and Chairs of their respective MFA programs have teamed up to present a selection of their students' work from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Boston University's School of Visual Art. The exhibition, *Playbook*, comprises work across media by twenty-six, newly minted masters of fine art. It will be on view at On Stellar Rays from June 30 – July 9, 2017, with an opening reception on Friday, June 30th from 6-8pm. A catalog accompanies the exhibition.

Every artist has their own collection of creative moves; they're constantly refining trusted favorites while developing new strategies. In graduate school, art students are encouraged to be more aware of their own positioning, impulses, and interests so that their curiosity can thrive over the course of a lifetime. By chasing their individual motivations, students learn how to fluidly navigate the art worlds and communities they choose to inhabit, encountering peers and artistic ancestors along the way.

Both Halvorson and William are recent additions to these storied institutions, rooted in the classical traditions of painting and sculpture. Both are committed to the rich history of the disciplines as a way to reimagine what expression, presence and visibility mean in America today. Several of the works in the exhibition suggest the psychological relationship to vernacular architecture and landscape, such as a painting of a dreamlike nocturnal basin, or a forest where trees are apparitions. Other works are preoccupied with the body, where materials figure and reconfigure subjectivities, such as a sculpture with copper limbs bound by a bikini-like bandage, or a collage that seams together enmeshed symbols of Americana.

In this moment of premature and insecure erasure, these artists insist on making their mark. By presenting their most honest selves, their enthusiasm is inspiring and their willingness to fail becomes a daring act of resistance. By recommitting each day to their individual practices, these young artists remind us to make and share and think – and make again.