

The background of the entire page is a close-up photograph of a light-colored wood grain, showing vertical lines and natural variations in tone from pale yellow to a warm, medium brown. The texture is smooth but shows the natural grain of the wood.

There's Still Plenty of Time

Gabrielle Mack

Artist Statement

As I grow older, my understanding of the past ebbs and flows as new experiences recolor my memories. Long-forgotten moments are brought to the surface, while others sink into the subconscious. I find myself making a conscientious effort to preserve these fragments of my past. 'There's Still Plenty of Time' is a project that revisits these moments and interrogates those memories. By sifting through thousands of family photos and selecting ones that recall a truth more evident than that of my non-photographic memory, I use the methodical process of creating cyanotypes to highlight my memories with intention. This process involves waiting and washing away parts of an image, allowing me to recreate the image in vivid blue and present the past alongside the subjective present. Each box invites viewers to engage with a unique story, revealed through the personal objects and images it contains.



Main exhibition, floor installation and boxes opened.

Contextualization



#6, Found Book Page and Walnut, 8" x 5", 2019, Eli Craven

This work by Eli Craven was the initial spark of inspiration for the direction of my project. His use of wood to obscure part of an image felt very intimate. There is something about this medium that invites touch. The fact that wood is a natural material, it works so well in combination with photos of people, and particularly well in this series of his on human form. It heavily informed my first few attempts at shape and interrogating how to create with wood and image, my first few iterations were partial reveals without opening.



Five Generations Quilt, Joan Lyons

The Five Generations Quilt is an exploration of passing family images down through the use of cyanotype on fabric to make a quilt. I think while not directly referencing this piece throughout the semester, it was something that lingered throughout the entire year and stuck in the back of my head as I created the tiling. This piece is a checkerboard design of photos passed down to Joan Lyons, an initial inspiration for my work and point of reference to the power of cyanotype to preserve memory.



The Cultural Exchange Rate, Tania El Khoury

The Cultural Exchange Rate seen at the Penny Stamps Lecture Series was a great inspiration to *There's Still Plenty of Time*. Her use of audience interaction to tell familial stories was something I adapted into my own project. I did this by creating a similar mechanism to her lockers, in her work the audience is asked to open and insert themselves into her memories of family. In my work I ask the audience to open and reveal my family memories as well.

Anderson, Christina Z. "Cyanotype: The Blueprint in Contemporary Practice." Amazon, Focal Press, 2019

Cyanotype by Christina Anderson is a comprehensive exploration into the science of cyanotype making. From beginner to advanced methodologies it goes in depth into different techniques available within the medium as well as suggestions into exposure times for different materials as well as the history of the process. Detailing that the process has been around since around 1842, only a few years after the novelty of photography came about. It also includes information on how to preserve prints once they are made along with examples from contemporary cyanotype artists. With many examples of the range of work that can be made from cyanotypes, some of the most interesting work to me is the alternative printing processes that are done on nonpaper objects. There is a whole chapter dedicated to alternative surfaces, including but not limited to wood, glass, and fabric. This has been immensely helpful to my practice already, not only getting a more in depth understanding of the process and small methods I can use to better my prints, but also gives way to new ideas for how to approach found objects. I plan on using this information from the book to learn how to print on glass, which from the reading I've learned is a very intensive process. A process requiring up to a month worth of preparation time and drying of the negative before actually printing. This chapter of the book confirms that my desire to print on just about any surface is a possibility. Aside from this important chapter for my work it's been really beneficial to have reference to the troubleshooting problems chapter in the book which has given extensive looks into how to remedy just about any problem you could come across in the printing process. I have already come across several issues in my work that I'd previously been unsure of what the issue was but now Anderson's writing has bridged the gap between my understanding and the resolution of issues I've faced.

Ellegood, Anne, and Johanna Burton. The Uncertainty of Objects and Ideas: Recent Sculpture, 2006.

In a collection of work from various sculpture artists, *The Uncertainty of Objects and Ideas* showcases artists' fundamental desire to extend beyond the normalcy of objects and delve into the haptics of the subconscious. Questioning ideas of traditional mediums and forms this collection of work expands on alternative routes for displays of abundance, discarded materials, and new interpretations of form. With an emphasis on uncertainty, this book influences the reader to think twice about how to derive meaning from these works, with many purely focusing on composition and color rather than the subject matter with pieces often leaving the feeling of them being unresolved or ambiguous.

But I'd like to focus my attention on two artists in particular from this collection. Those artists are Evan Holloway and Charles Long. Both of these artists have works that live together with the same type of ambiguous nature, there is a common sense of unease to their sculptures often showcasing found objects in somewhat terrifying ways. I think it was important for me to note that Charles Long claims that making sculptures is an extremely personal and individualistic act, which I believe gets at the heart of my project and confirms to me that my final deliverable taking the form of a sculpture of sorts doubles down on this concept of individualism. Long is also a 'junk' artist, which I felt fell in line with my ideas of using objects that have little functionality or value, and was my original concept of questioning what junk could mean. So seeing his works provided a multitude of ways to compose unlike objects together. And Holloway's work is exciting as well, his use of form and inclusivity of kinetic objects within the structures is inspiring. I do think that in the case of Holloway, I see more ways of how I wouldn't approach my structures. He uses a lot of materials that I don't have an interest in but his means for displaying and organizing them is akin to what I imagine myself doing. Aside from Holloway and Long, many other artists in this book have given rise to new ideas and specifically means to include imagery in sculpture which is a key element to my project

Creative Process



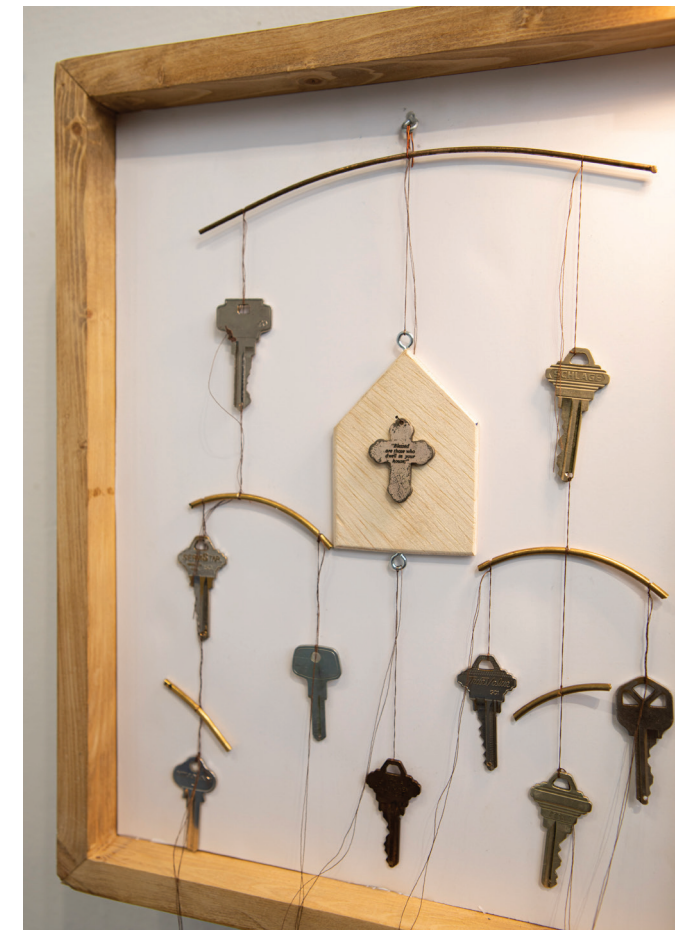
(Exteriors)

Top images is an initial exploration of door cutouts, meant to expose a specific element of each image inside. I later decided against this process, not only to simplify them as a group but to remove any availability of an audience seeing inside, forcing interaction with each piece.

The bottom is the final decision I came upon, laser engraving the dates each photo was taken inside their respective boxes.



(Interiors) Images to Negatives to Cyanotypes



Each interior was a different process aside from creating cyanotypes. In this particular one I cut, bent, and hung this metal forms to create a mobile of keys and wood. This piece was a representation of each singling of my father and their ties to religious up holdings.



Left, finished checkerboard printed and painted tile installation
Right, washing of cyanotypes

Details shots of several of the interiors





4.2.2009

Box closed up close detail.



Final exhibition space, boxes exposed.

Conclusion

This project holds a special place in me and I am proud of what came of it. I enjoy the interactivity of it most, I enjoy that I have created a space that allows people to reflect on their own familial memories. I've had some good feedback thus far upon viewing other people's reactions to the work. Yet, I do think that in the end it took the form of something unexpected and unfamiliar to me, I feel a bit like a stranger to it. It was my first time working with wood and many other of the materials I chose to use. In many ways I was excited about the opportunity to learn about these processes, but felt I lacked the skills to craft them to the standard I would typically expect of myself in other mediums. I also think that this being the first time that I've worked on a project for this long presented many challenges that I will be able to handle with more grace going forward not only creatively but in my work ethic and self presentation. And further reflecting now, the topic of family, the way I view family, is very self serving. I've realized through this year that is a theme that follows much of my work. Going forward I would like to leave this project where it lays, with so much effort poured into it still falls flat to me in a way which I believe is due to this feeling of constantly looking inwards.

With that being said, I think this project needed to me to make it. I believe I will be able to look back on this as a chapter closed to be sparsely revisited. This course and dedication to making this past year has provided me a better understanding of my creative ability and intent as well as a renewed gratitude for my peers.

There's Still Plenty of Time has allowed me to take time for personal reflection on family values and how these moments of the past have impacted me into adulthood. But now as I prepare to graduate, the energy that was dedicated to this work can now be directed to creating in presentness without the weight of the past being such a heavy influence on my making.

I look forward to using what I've learned and searching still for what I have yet to learn.