

Alfred University graduates collaborating on exhibition at Cohen Gallery

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ALFRED, NY – Artwork by Alfred University alumnae Monica Duncan '02 and Lara Odell '98 will be shown in an exhibition at the Cohen Gallery opening Saturday, April 6.

Duncan and Odell both earned B.F.A. degrees from Alfred University's School of Art and Design. Their exhibition, titled *Fitting In and Standing Out*, will showcase a sampling of their work, including collaborative pieces they created while at Alfred University, as well as their most recent individual projects.

An opening reception for *Fitting In and Standing Out* will be held 6-8 p.m. April 6; the exhibition will be on view through Aug. 9.

In Duncan's and Odell's collaborative works, a recurring theme is the close observation of how bodies fit in or take on the qualities of their environment. Whether it be in a physical space or on a two-dimensional surface, the artists play with how bodies blend in and out, mimicking shapes, colors and gestures, and in doing so, rearrange the figure-ground relationship. Utilizing custom garments and other props as extensions of the body, Duncan and Odell are interested how we experience and perceive bodies and objects in space—how to be simultaneously seeing and the ones being seen?

Although in different capacities and interpretations, the idea of the “cut-out” has been a common trope in both Duncan and Odell's collaborative and individual artworks. Duncan plays with the notion of the cut-out in video-based performance pieces, using sets, luma-keying and other processing effects and props; Odell takes the concept into the realm of painting and drawing, merging the two practices. Both explore ways in which the body and objects mimic or defy their surroundings; where they deviate, Duncan uses actual bodies and props; Odell creates paper representations. Odell's cut-outs play with ideas of transience, mutability, the fragility of identity. She uses cut paper and paint to create figurative scenes, calling to mind the artifice and ephemeral nature of being.

Duncan and Odell met at Alfred University in 2000, when Duncan was an undergraduate art student and Odell was the technical associate at the Institute for Electronic Art. Their first collaborative project, *Antibodies* (2002), was realized both at Alfred University and the Experimental Television Center in Owego, NY. Duncan was an artist in residence at the Institute for Electronic Arts last October.