

## Alfred University alumnae to exhibit work at Cohen Gallery

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Alfred University's Cohen Gallery on Main Street will open its 2017-18 exhibitions Friday, Sept. 15, with shows by two 2001 alumnae of the School of Art & Design. Liz Ainslie's "The Part of Sight" and Desiree Leary's "Real Lookers" will open with a reception from 6-9pm.

The elements within Liz Ainslie's paintings function as fundamental building blocks of perception—represented and rearranged. As a poet might reorder the parts of speech, Ainslie uses the language of abstract painting as a structure upon which to develop a visual investigation of human perception. To this end, the artist has developed a vocabulary of non-objective forms that sidle up with everyday objects, bodies, architecture, and the natural world.

Equally important to Ainslie's work is her manipulation of space through the use of color theory. Each of her paintings holds a record of the color relationships developed by mixing oil paint on the palette and drawing from the memory of observed color. Ainslie uses photography as a sketchbook, capturing interactions between architecture, light with natural interventions on human spaces.

Using consumer-grade cameras, on-demand printing processes, and readymade home goods, Brooklyn-based artist Desiree (Des) examines the tension between the photographic image and its physical presence in space. The works presented in Real Lookers often upend viewer's expectations by throwing the ordinary legibility of snapshots and household wares into question. New perspectives are overlaid on functional objects—like plates, picture frames, and blankets—by compounding their appearances with imagery referring back to themselves. In this fashion, American life's everyday materialism is represented through the interaction of its most familiar implements and their own images—that is, between reality and its depiction.

Des often creates socially engaging contexts for her art multiples, awarding them as prizes at public events, mailing them through the post, or selling them at a low cost in retail environments of her own devisement. This ensures that almost any viewer can choose to take something home and experience it on their own terms—even (and especially) if that means the works are placed into contexts beyond the artist's original intention or control. In this way, Des hopes to encourage conversation about the role of art outside of traditional galleries and underscore how seeing a work over time changes both it and the viewer.

For this show, Des has created a self-service, honor-system, pay-as-you-wish Souvenir Shop where visitors may take home a postcard or poster and "pay" with their own artworks or other monetary and non-monetary offerings. These transactional goods will be displayed on pedestals in the gallery, and contributors are welcome to add the "Real Lookers" exhibition to their résumé.