

Hernease Davis
Recapitulation

Jacob Haupt
Real to Me

About the Artists

Hernease Davis earned her MFA from the International Center of Photography - Bard College. Her current body of work uses photograms, cyanotypes, performance and craft to emphasize self-care through the artistic process. The solo exhibition of her series, *A Womb of My Own (Mistakes Were Made in Development)* opened at the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, NY in May, 2018. Her work was selected for Photography Now 2016 at the Center of Photography at Woodstock and was included in *The Surface of Things* at the Houston Center for Photography, an exhibition featuring photographers working with camera-less techniques. She has also exhibited with the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, the International Center of Photography, Foley Gallery, Rush Arts, Java Project and Spaceworks as an Nfinit Foundation Artist-In-Residence. Hernease is on faculty at the Visual Studies Workshop and has served as a Visiting Lecturer at ICP-Bard where she led a course exploring empathy through art practice.

Jacob Haupt is an artist working with photography, video, and sculpture. His work employs pop culture as both metaphor and mirror for addressing the tragedy of becoming an adult. After completing the book *Infinity Gate* with Noah Jackson in 2015, he recently released a photobook of his own, *Gloom*. Airlock Gallery (CA) hosted his first solo show *Beyond the Super Rainbow* in 2015, and he has had two further solo exhibitions of his work, at Gallery 303 in 2016 and at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art in 2019. He has continued to exhibit nationally, internationally, online, and in print. His work has been featured by *Self Publish Be Happy*, *Vice*, *Musee Magazine*, *Der Greif*, *Don/Dean*, and *Ordinary Magazine*, among others.

I. Introduction

Hernease Davis: Recapitulation

Brooklyn based artist Hernease Davis presents new multi-media work with silk cyanotypes, sound installation, and silver gelatin prints. Davis' studio practice has been influenced by a love and study of music and the crafting of environments that allow the artist to explore responsive **improvisation** and repetition as a means of growth and healing. As Davis says, "I change, the work changes. As the work changes, it changes me..." Recapitulation refers to an element of musical theory, where a musical theme is presented again later on, after its initial appearance. The word recapitulation can also mean an act of summarizing, restating the main points of an idea or event. Fusing these notions of restarting and renewing, this exhibition looks to personal modes of processing, calming, and coping as a means of confronting personal experiences of trauma.

Jacob Haupt: Real to Me

Jacob Haupt uses lovingly handmade props and costumes to explore pop culture and what he calls, "the tragedy of becoming an adult." Using himself, his wife and daughter, and his friends as performers, Haupt creates pictures that are absurd, funny, and poignant **tableaus** of monsters, heroes, villains, and devils. Through these images he shares his feelings, weighs the value of nostalgia, and basks in the enduring appeal of *Batman* and *The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*. Though his work celebrates the staged, the fictitious, and the performed *Real to Me* is also a sincere, peculiar, joyful, delirious, and real family portrait.



II. Picturing Portraiture

In both of the exhibitions on view we can see a variety of portraits, yet the artists use this idea in very different ways. We tend to think of a **portrait** as a representation of an individual—a literal depiction of someone's body or face. What happens if the artist decides to blur that direct mode of representation? What different connections can arise when a work of art skews our understanding of the person, or persons, we're looking at in a portrait?

Questions for Looking:

→ Jacob Haupt creates images with his family. In Haupt's photographs, the artist uses lots of costumes, props and sets which turn the family into characters, influenced by tv, movie and graphic novels. We might recognize the character—someone from Power Rangers, or Star Wars for example—but can we know anything about the person inside the costume? What kinds of emotions are these subjects communicating, through their expressions or body language, that help you to understand them as an individual apart from the pop culture they are referencing?

→ In Hernease Davis' exhibition, you can see a collection of large fabric **cyanotypes** hanging from the ceiling. Cyanotypes are made through coating a surface such as paper or fabric with an iron-rich solution, which when exposed to UV light creates the brilliant blue color you see here. Portions of the fabric will continue to shift in color over time—and for this reason the artist refers to them as “self-portraits”, linking the idea of change over time in the work to her own process of personal growth. What do you think about these works as a portrait?

→ Can a portrait come from symbols that suggest certain aspects of someone's personality? Could we think of portraits as a starting point towards developing a deeper understanding of what makes someone who they are, instead of a single image which reveals everything we think we need to know?

Images from top to bottom: Images from left to right, top to bottom: Jacob Haupt, *Batman Wept*, 2016; Jacob Haupt, *Embrace*, 2018; Hernease Davis, from the series, “... new love”, 2020; Jacob Haupt, *Jet Pack Man*, 2018



III. Seeing Sound

Sound is a vibration that moves in waves through the air, solids, and liquids. We can hear, feel or even see these vibrations—think about the way a very loud bass sound can make the room shake or the windows rattle. Visual art is usually thought of as being audibly silent, but visual artworks can evoke or employ sound in ways that open up new ways of thinking and engaging with them.

Questions for Looking

- Step into Hernease Davis' exhibition and close your eyes. What images come into your mind while you listen to the sounds happening around you? Do you see specific shapes or colors?
- Pick one of Jacob Haupt's photographs to focus on. What sounds do you like would accompany this image? Do any specific noises come to mind when you visualize this image coming to life?
- Artist Hernease Daivis is influenced by her love of music, and when the artist is moving through the world, she often notices the things she hears, before the things she sees - the soundscape of her life is as important as the visual. When you step into the world, do the sounds around you blend into the background, or come to the front of your experience? How does the **aural** backdrop of the world influence the way you think about your surroundings?



IV. Photography and Craft

In Jacob Haupt's photographs, subjects wear a variety of costumes and masks, and different sets and props are used. While the images reference big budget movie franchises or sleek graphic novels, here, the sets and costumes are all handmade., using materials like plastic bags, duct tape, house paint and glitter. In several of Hernease Davis's images, the artist has added the element of **crochet** to her photographs, adding a three dimensional element to the work.

→ How does the handmade aspect of Jacob Haupt's photographs make you feel about them as works of art? Do you feel more connected to the work, or does it seem like the artist is using **artifice** or trickery?

→ What does the element of crochet in Hernease Davis' exhibition do to your interpretation of the work as photography? Are these works of art still photographs even if they include other media and techniques? Why do we respond differently to a woven photograph than a printed one?

Glossary

Aruai	Relating to the ear or the sense of hearing
Artifice	When an artist uses deception or trickery in a work of art
Crochet	A craftform using needlework, and consisting of the interlocking of looped stitches (using yarn, silk, cotton, or other fabrics) formed with a single thread and a hooked needle
Cyanotype	The name cyanotype was derived from the Greek name <i>cyan</i> , meaning “dark-blue impression.” Cyanotype photography is a printing process that produces a cyan-blue print. Engineers used the process as a simple and low-cost process to produce copies of drawings, referred to as blueprints. The process uses two chemicals: ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide, which are UV sensitive, producing the deep blue color when applied to fabric and exposed to sunlight.
Improvisation	When used in the context of a work of art, this word refers to a very spontaneous performance, action, or gesture, which is acted out without specific or scripted preparation
Portrait	A representation of a particular individual, usually intended to capture their likeness or personality
Sound	Vibrations that travel through the air or another medium and can be heard when they reach a person's or animal's ear.
Tableau	Describes a work of art in which subjects or characters are arranged for picturesque or dramatic effect and appear absorbed and completely unaware of the existence of the viewer

Reading List

DeCarava, Roy, with texts by Radiclan Clytus and Sherry Turner
DeCarava. 2019. Roy DeCarava: the sound i saw. New York: First Print Press / David Zwirner Books

Meatyard, Ralph Eugene. 1974. The Family Album of Lucybelle Crater. [Highlands, N.C.] : Millerton, N.Y : Jargon Society ; Distributed by Bk. Organization

Sherman, Cindy, Lena Essling, Daniel Birnbaum, Gunnar B. Kvaran, Hanne Beate Ueland, and Mirjam Varadinis. 2013. Cindy Sherman: Untitled Horrors. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag.

Schaaf, Larry. 2018. Sun Gardens: Cyanotypes by Anna Atkins. New York: New York Public Library.

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This guide serves as an education supplement to the exhibitions, *Hernease Davis: Recapitulation*, and *Jacob Haupt: Real to Me*, and contains information about the works on view, questions for looking and discussion as well as room for student responses. To schedule a tour of this exhibition for students, go to: silvereye.org

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