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PRESS RELEASE

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**Irwin Scholars 2012  
MAY 23 – JUNE 17**

Opening Reception:  
Wednesday, May 23  
5–7:00PM

Awards Ceremony 6:00PM

The events are free  
and open to the public

**2012 RECIPIENTS:**

**Chelsea Cramer**  
**Gina Farkas,**  
**Ari Finkelstein**  
**Kristen Gautier-Downes**  
**Elizabeth Hibbard**  
**William Lee**  
**Louise Leong**  
**Miguel Libarnes**  
**Oscar Moreno**  
**David Rosales**  
**Marnie Sehayek**  
**Melissa Wong**

High resolution images  
available upon request

<http://arts.ucsc.edu/sesnon>

Since it was initiated in 1986, the Irwin Scholarship exhibition is more than a show of student work; it is an active platform that highlights emerging artists of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, whose work will shape the art world of tomorrow. The 2012 Irwin Scholarship exhibition is on view at the Sesnon Gallery, Porter College, UC Santa Cruz from May 23 through June 17. Please join us for the opening reception on Wednesday, May 23 from 5:00–7:00PM, and awards ceremony at 6:00PM, with special guest Irwin Alumni, Dana Norrell and Ann Altstatt and others.

"The work in this exhibition covers the spectrum, from art's traditions—figure and landscape paintings— to emergent forms, such as 3-D animation." —Frank Galuszka Professor of Art

The William Hyde and Susan Benteen Irwin Scholarship showcases and celebrates the vision of promising young artists at UC Santa Cruz. The Irwin Scholarship is granted annually to twelve outstanding art students, selected for their academic excellence, creativity, and potential. As a collective, the Irwin scholars are a microcosm of the current artistic movements at UCSC.

This year, the exhibition will feature large-scale works in drawing, painting, sculpture, installation, new media, video, printmaking, and photography. Through this diversity in approach the Irwin Scholars present a multi-faceted discussion of current issues that engage a wide audience.

The Sesnon Gallery encourages interdisciplinary discourse through the lens of the arts. Gallery hours are Tuesday–Saturday, noon to 5:00PM and Wednesday until 8:00PM. The gallery is located at Porter College, UCSC and is wheelchair accessible. Admission is free and parking is free on Saturdays. Parking permits are available weekdays at the main campus entrance kiosk for \$6/day and \$3 at the Porter College lot for special events. Group tours are available by appointment at (831) 459-3606. Please visit our website at <http://arts.ucsc.edu/sesnon>.

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## Student Profiles

**Chelsea Cramer** had a childhood that was largely spent adventuring outdoors, playing video games, and reading fantasy novels. This experience has instilled a love for adventure and storytelling and can be found in the way she constructs her artwork.

**Gina Farkas** is a student of art and environmental interpretation. Her focus in sculpture and photography complement a personal exploration in physical architecture and objects. She uses elements of memory, history, and identity in her process of making work.

**Ari Finkelstein** is a painter who draws on figurative art. He utilizes an economy of line and color to translate three-dimensional subjects.

**Kristen Gautier-Downes** grew up traveling between California and New York City. Kristen is a painter who receives inspiration from her appreciation for nature and her personal experience with natural disasters. Kristen engages her viewers in themes of environmental awareness.

**Elizabeth Hibbard** is a photographer, filmmaker, and multimedia artist who was born and raised in a rural suburb of San Jose, California. Her work is primarily concerned with the issues and aesthetics of the abject, familial relationships, and disparities between the past and present and the public and private in regards to emotional memory and family history.

**William Lee** is an artist and critical theorist whose recent experiments expand on the past lives of everyday objects. His work shares a sentiment of new-found hope with an inkling of irony.

**Louise Leong** is an illustrator from San Mateo, CA. Inspired by the narrative of vintage cartoons and comics, she has created a universe of characters with a mythology of their own. Her imagery blends humor and wit while paying homage to the lumpy-headed cartoon rascals who came before her own. With a petulant whine and an irreverent 'tude, she salutes the other Nancys and Sluggos of the world whose hooligan club she claims membership to.

**Miguel Libarnes** was born and raised in the Philippines. Now living and studying in the U.S.A., and exhibiting his work in Santa Cruz and San Jose, CA. Using sculpture and multimedia, he creates video installations about sexuality, identity, and human connection.

**Oscar Moreno** was born in East Los Angeles. He uses printmaking to investigate his Mexican American heritage and religious upbringing. Building on Aztec mythology and Catholic tradition, he invites viewers to indulge in historical reflection and ritual.

**David Rosales** was born and raised in the small agricultural community of Watsonville, CA. As one of the few people in his community to go to a four-year college, he has developed as a photographer and has created projects that document and address issues in the educational system.

**Marnie Sehayek** is a community organizer and artist from Los Angeles, CA. She utilizes large-scale photography, the photographic printmaking processes, and site-specific installation to explore the politics of the visual and metaphorical counter-narratives. Marnie will receive a BA in Art and a BA in Community Studies in June, 2012.

**Melissa Wong** was born and raised in San Francisco where she continues to spend much of her time. Her interests in narrative, human interaction and her Asian American heritage influence her drawings and paintings.