

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Origins & Perceptions; Irwin Scholars Exhibition 2015**

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**Dates:** May 27th - June 13th

**Opening Reception:** Wednesday, May 27th, 5-7pm

**Awards Ceremony:** 6pm

**2015 Irwin Scholars:** Seth Andrews, Austin Carlson, Nesho Dimov, Rachel Finn, Melanya Hamasyan, Haley Jensen, Alex Khah, Cedar Kirwin, Edward Ramirez, Maria Montes Tapia, Anthony Torrano and Grant Wells

“This year’s Irwin Scholars bring me optimism for the future of art. They are a collaborative force prying open the questions and subjects that built this civilization. I’m honored to be working with such a diverse and relevant group of emerging artists.”

-- Mark Shunney, *Sesnon Gallery Manager & Assistant Curator*

The Mary Porter Sesnon Gallery’s annual Irwin Scholarship Award exhibition showcases a collection of UCSC’s most promising undergraduate artists. The William Hyde and Susan Benteen Irwin Scholarship Fund was established in 1986 and generates annual merit scholarships to further the education of selected UC Santa Cruz art students. The 2015 award recipients are Seth Andrews, Austin Carlson, Nesho Dimov, Rachel Finn, Melanya Hamasyan, Haley Jensen, Alex Khah, Cedar Kirwin, Edward Ramirez, Maria Montes Tapia, Anthony Torrano and Grant Wells.

This year’s exhibition, *Origins & Perceptions*, unveils the twelve artists’ relationships to both their personal and societal surroundings. Each artist’s work interprets their experience within these respective environments and culminates into not purely a show, but an invitation for inquisition and dialogue. How has modern technology shaped American landscapes, and what are the repercussions of current technologies? What is hidden in the folds of urbanization and how can we reconcile persistent imbalances of power? How does society create relationships between bodies and the spaces we inhabit? When does an ego transform from a reflection of one’s self into a reflection of their society, and vice versa? In what ways do our origins predict our present and how can spiritual practices foster humility? Why does reality abstract our senses, and adversely, when do we seek abstraction as a means to avoid or otherwise confront reality?

*Origins & Perceptions* presents not only an exciting plethora of ideas but a combination of traditional and innovative art-making practices. The show will exhibit painting, traditional and experimental photography, printmaking, works on paper, found objects, welded figures using recycled metal, installations supplemented by videography, participatory rituals, unique casting and preservation processes, and environmental art.

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 metered parking is available at Porter College. Group tours are available by appointment at (831) 459-3606. Please visit our website at <http://arts.ucsc.edu/sesnon/>.