

Collura's work featured in three upcoming solo exhibitions

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UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — After a hiatus of showing work in a solo exhibition capacity, Bonnie Collura, associate professor of art, will be showing new work in three strategically placed solo exhibitions between September 2017 and January 2019. These projects aim to highlight different works done over the past 10 years in her Bellefonte studio, while teaching at Penn State.

"Moving a sculpture-based studio from Brooklyn, New York, to Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, came with many adjustments," Collura said. "On the plus side, I was finally able to afford a working place that provided space around the work, not only the bare minimum square footage required to make one piece at a time. Working slowly within this new space gave me permission to reflect and experiment, something I would have been fearful to do when I lived in New York when showing at a more frequent capacity. Once I allowed myself to engage fully in the process of re-learning my work, I began forming three distinct projects that have taken over a decade to fully understand."

Working within mediums of traditional sculpture, textiles, video and installation, Collura creates forms that are simultaneously relatable and alien. Most of her works incorporate faces or bodies in some way, but her interest is not in anatomical representation. Rather, her new bodies of work investigate how images of the body are constructed by politics and popular culture. Through abstraction and figuration, Collura's new work incorporates quilt making, flexible molding and casting of hard shell forms, using techniques of collage, fusion and dislocation to create meshes.

"In the simplest ways, I am just a kid that likes to push materials around and see something weird happen," she said.

"Patchwork" kicks off Collura's exhibition lineup and is a collection of new sculptural and textile-based works that reflects over a decade of material experimentation. In this body of work, Collura builds new figurative-based agglomerations from bits, shards and found textures mashed to fluctuate somewhere between synthesis and fracture. Each work intertwines hard, soft and raw surfaces to embody a spirit of *sprezzatura*, an Italian word often referred to as "the beauty in imperfections." "Patchwork" will be on display Sept. 9 to Oct. 7 at Kustera Projects in Brooklyn, New York, with an opening reception from 6-8 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 9.

Next in Collura's exhibition lineup is "Spillover" at 'sindikrit gallery in Baltimore, Maryland. "Spillover" incorporates several mediums, including a figural sculpture, photographs and a three-channel video made from her performing in a 10-layer wearable garment called "Armor for White Light," a textile-based sculpture built from 2012 to 2014. In the video, also titled "Spillover," Collura acts out a variety of movements that were then edited to create a kaleidoscopic visual, co-produced by Sidney Mullis, a 2016 master of fine arts graduate.



Image: Penn State

"On Target," steel, wood, repurposed fabric, purchased fabric, clothing, thread, batting, text. 123"x71"x32". 2016-2017.

In 'sindikit's exhibition space, Collura will project her "Spillover" video onto a screen, as well as a sculpture called "Beautiful Mother," which she started in 2015. The "Spillover" video and "Beautiful Mother" are two parts to "White Light," which was partially funded by a 2015 College of Arts and Architecture grant. This exhibition will be on display Sept. 17 to Oct. 28, with an opening reception from 4-7 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 17.

Lastly, "Prince," a large-scale installation, will be on display at Smack Mellon in Brooklyn, New York, from Jan. 19, 2018, to March 3, 2019. One part of "Prince" consists of the Prince figure, a project that Collura has worked on sporadically over the last 12 years, and was jump-started with a 2005 John F. Simon Guggenheim Fellowship grant. This large-scale form will be shown along with six other fabric and mylar-based works that will be installed throughout different architectural points of Smack Mellon's space.

When asked what she hopes viewers will take away from her work, Collura said, "I suppose the one thing I would like to echo in peoples' minds is that beyond labels — we are all bodies of beautifully mashed material, equally glimmering, and equally gutted."

To learn more about Collura's work, visit her website at www.bonniecollura.com.