

MILLS COLLEGE  
**ART MUSEUM**

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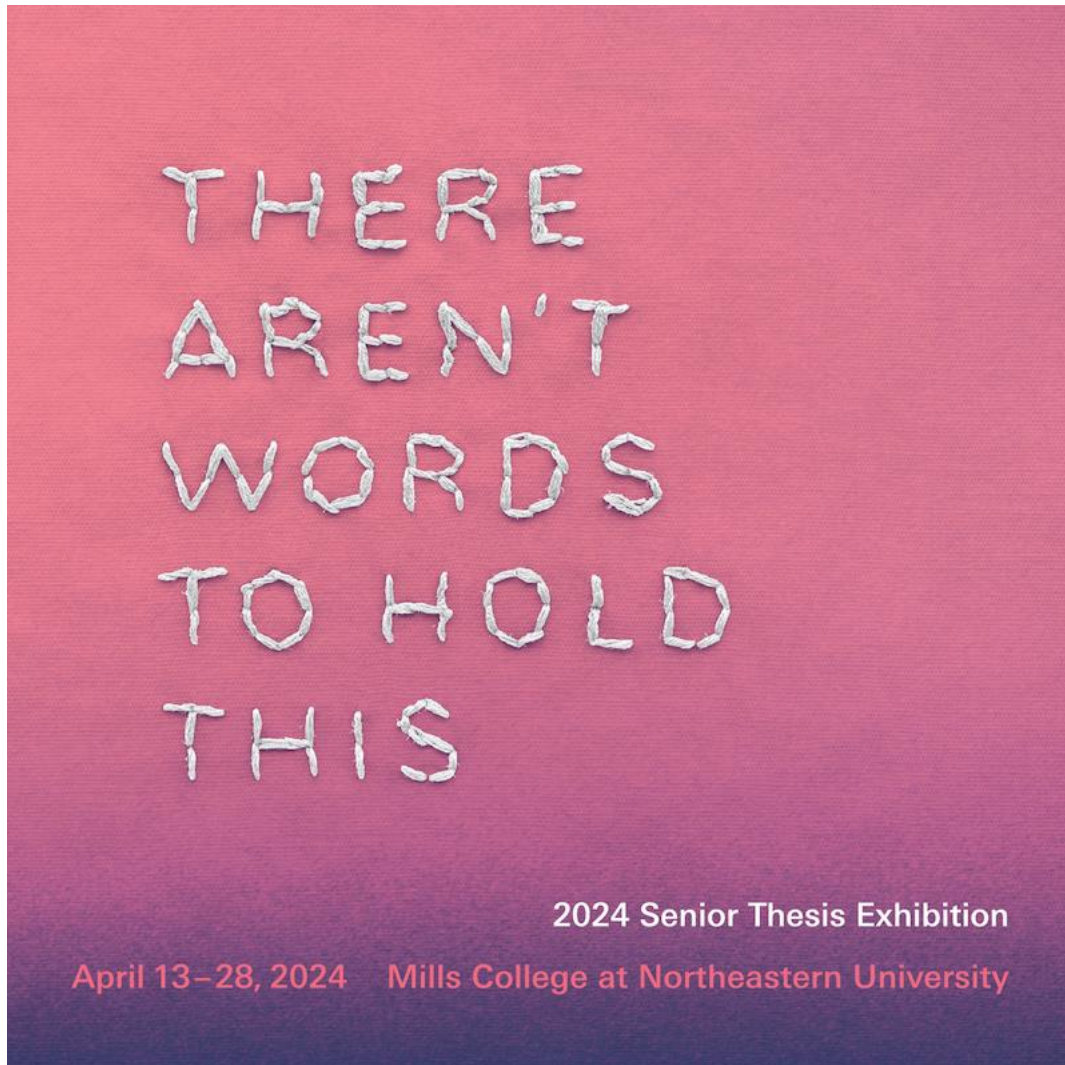
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## Senior Thesis Artists Transform Grief and Loss into Powerful Art



**THERE AREN'T WORDS TO HOLD THIS**  
**2024 SENIOR THESIS EXHIBITION**  
**MILLS COLLEGE AT NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY**  
APRIL 13 – APRIL 28, 2024

OPENING RECEPTION: SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2024 | 4:00-6:00 PM

Oakland, CA (March 12, 2024) – Mills College Art Museum is pleased to announce *There Aren't Words to Hold This*, the 2024 Senior Thesis Exhibition at Mills College at Northeastern University, from April 13 –

April 28, 2024. Featuring the work of graduating studio art majors, the senior thesis exhibition provides a unique opportunity for these artists to present their work in a professional art museum.

This year's presenting artists are Brianna Keely Cheng, Dani Collins, Esther Fuentes, Joyce Kuehn, Ollie Matityahu, Victory Okragly, Andalucia Prendes, and Kathryn Valente. Experimenting with a range of forms and media from painting and photography to sculpture and book arts, the artists in *There Aren't Words to Hold This* create work to explore grief, and loss, to reconcile familial relationships, and to challenge tradition.

## THE ARTISTS

**Brianna Keely Cheng** unveils her experiences of processing familial and social oppression by creating drawings, paintings, and photographs that express psychological pain and resilience. Her monochromatic compositions combine dramatic highlights and shadows and incorporate imagery representative of her identity as a martial artist, in addition to realistic self-portraiture acknowledging her struggles of overcoming depression and trauma.

**Dani Collins** is a lens-based media artist who creates work surrounding ideas of grief and childhood memory. In her practice she explores the raw and unfiltered emotions associated with the loss of a loved one that many are familiar with. Her current project focuses on the intricacies of her postmortem relationship with her late mother.

Using painting, ceramics, and book arts practices, **Esther Fuentes** reflects on how her family's complex history and dynamics play a role in who she is today and how her identities challenge the traditions she grew up with.

**Joyce Kuehn** is a multidisciplinary artist working primarily through sculpture. Her work conveys narratives of grief and mental health using the unique canvas of skateboard bodies. After losing her father to suicide in 2022, Joyce's art became a vehicle to commemorate him while sparking conversations about mental wellness.

**Ollie Matityahu** is an interdisciplinary artist focusing primarily on fiber and textile arts, painting and illustration, and ceramics. In this collection, they engage with the mutability and persistence of memory, grief, joy, and loss, through the lens of their relationship with their grandfather.

**Victory Okragly** is a digital illustrator working in character design. Many of his original creations explore gender, fantasy, and how they intertwine. His current project captures characters with a magical tool used within the real world—the tarot card—to bridge the gap between the worlds of imagination and reality.

**Andalucia Prendes** is an interdisciplinary artist who works in textile and book arts. She is particularly interested in how analog arts survive in an increasingly digital world. Recently, Prendes has focused on how the making processes of pre-Industrial sewing can be applied to modern fiber arts to resist fast fashion.

**Kathryn Valente** is a photographer and book artist who works around her experience in the equestrian world. Through photography, she reveals the emotion in the underbelly of this world and uses her books to pass on this knowledge.

## **PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

### **Opening Reception**

Sunday, April 14, 2024

4:00-6:00pm, Art Museum

Congratulate the artists on the culmination of their undergraduate studies and the beginning of an exciting artistic practice.

### **Palette Cleanser**

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

12pm-2pm, Tea Shop

Create a work of art during your lunch break! The senior thesis artists will guide you through cyanotype, collagraphy, air-dry clay, or just sit back and have your portrait painted.

Visit [mcam.mills.edu](http://mcam.mills.edu) for details.

### **About Mills College Art Museum**

Founded in 1925, Mills College Art Museum is a forum for exploring art and ideas and a laboratory for contemporary art practices. Through innovative exhibitions, programs, and collections, the museum engages and inspires the intellectual and creative life of the Mills community as well as the diverse audiences of the Bay Area and beyond.

Museum hours: Tuesday-Sunday 11:00am-4:00pm, Wednesday 11:00am-7:30pm

Admission is FREE and open to the public.

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