





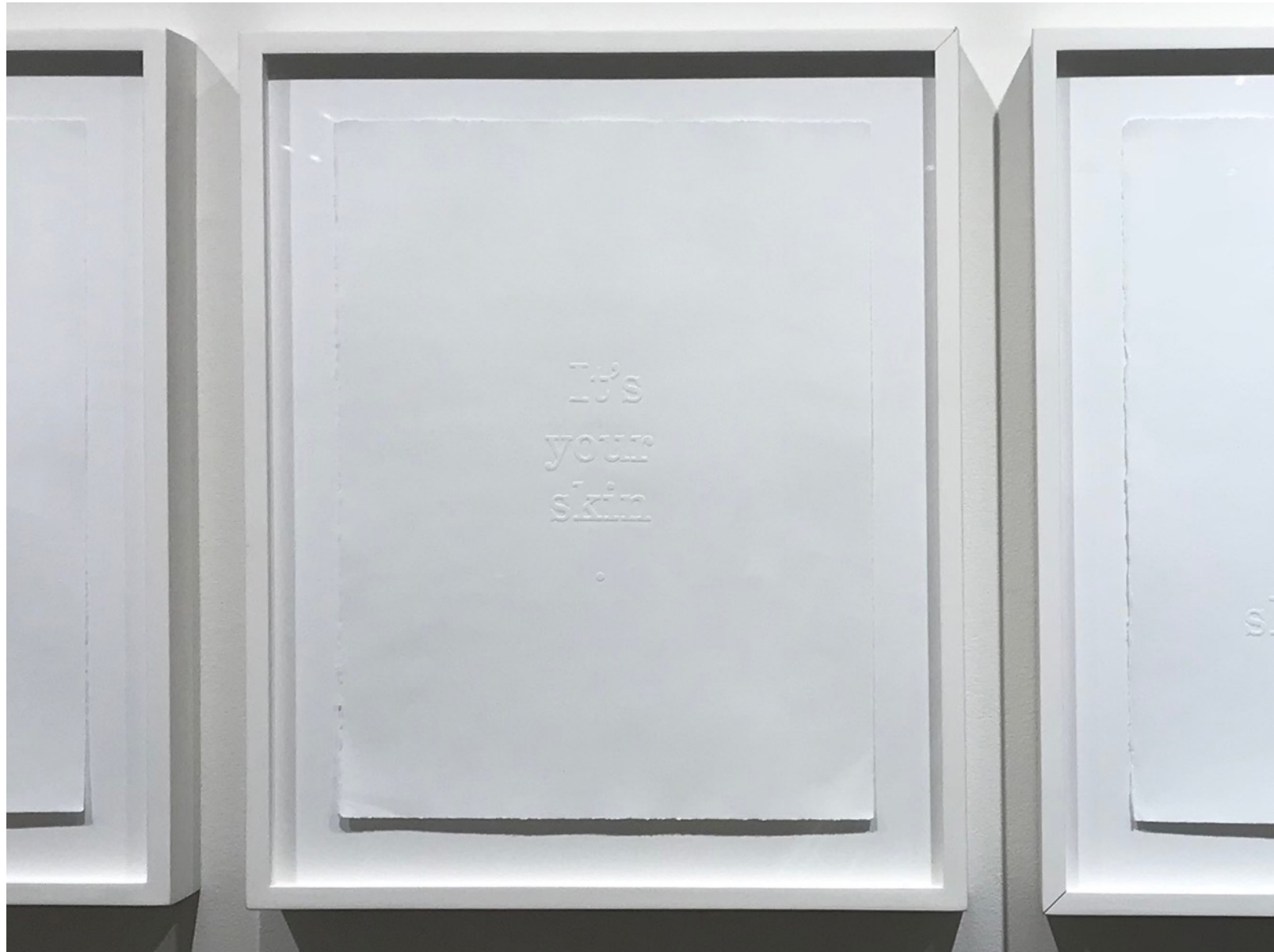


It's
a thread
the skin
a
hanging
nail
your teeth.

It's
your
skin

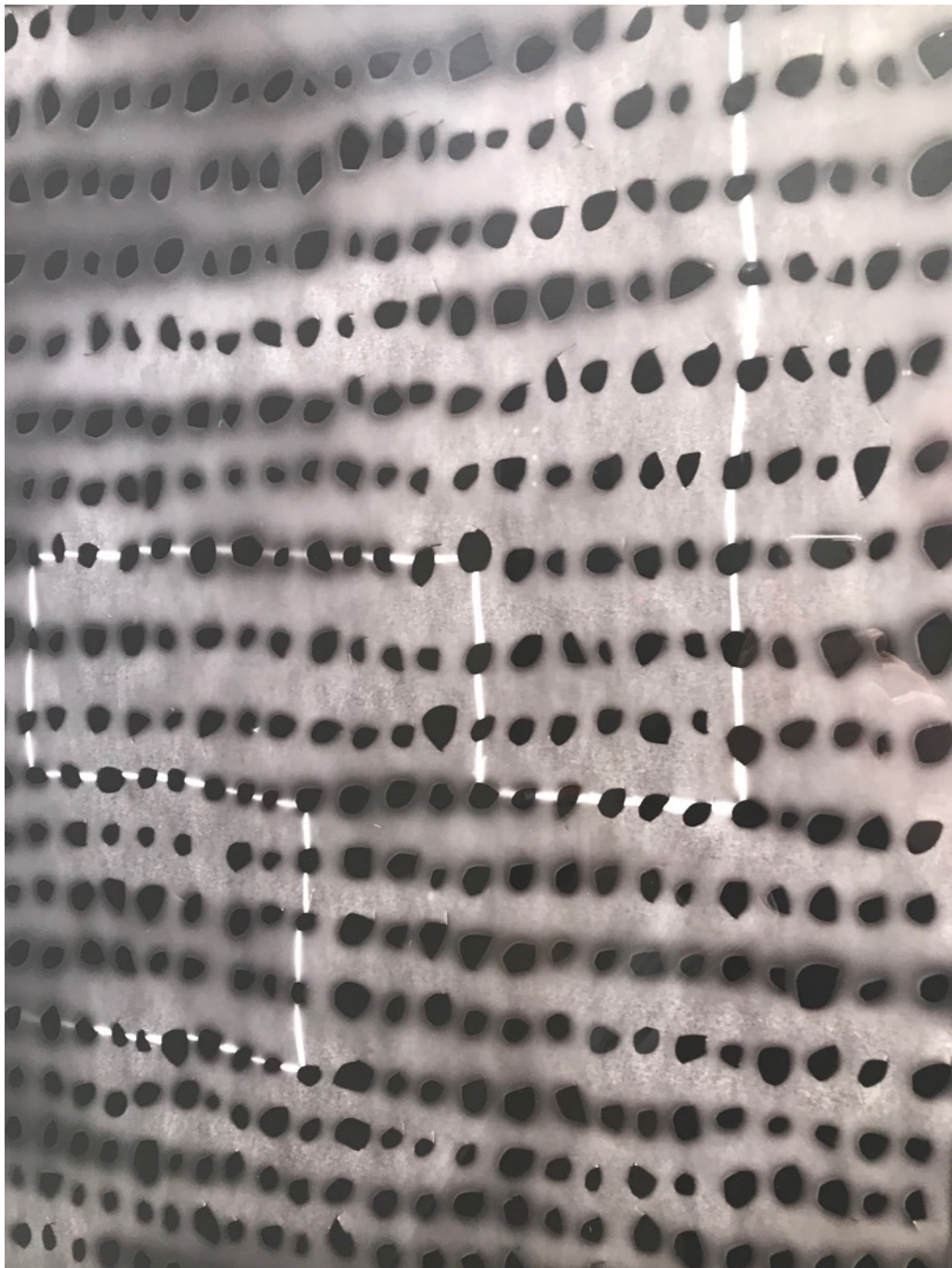
It's about
hanging
by a nail
or
a thread
by the
skin of your
teeth.

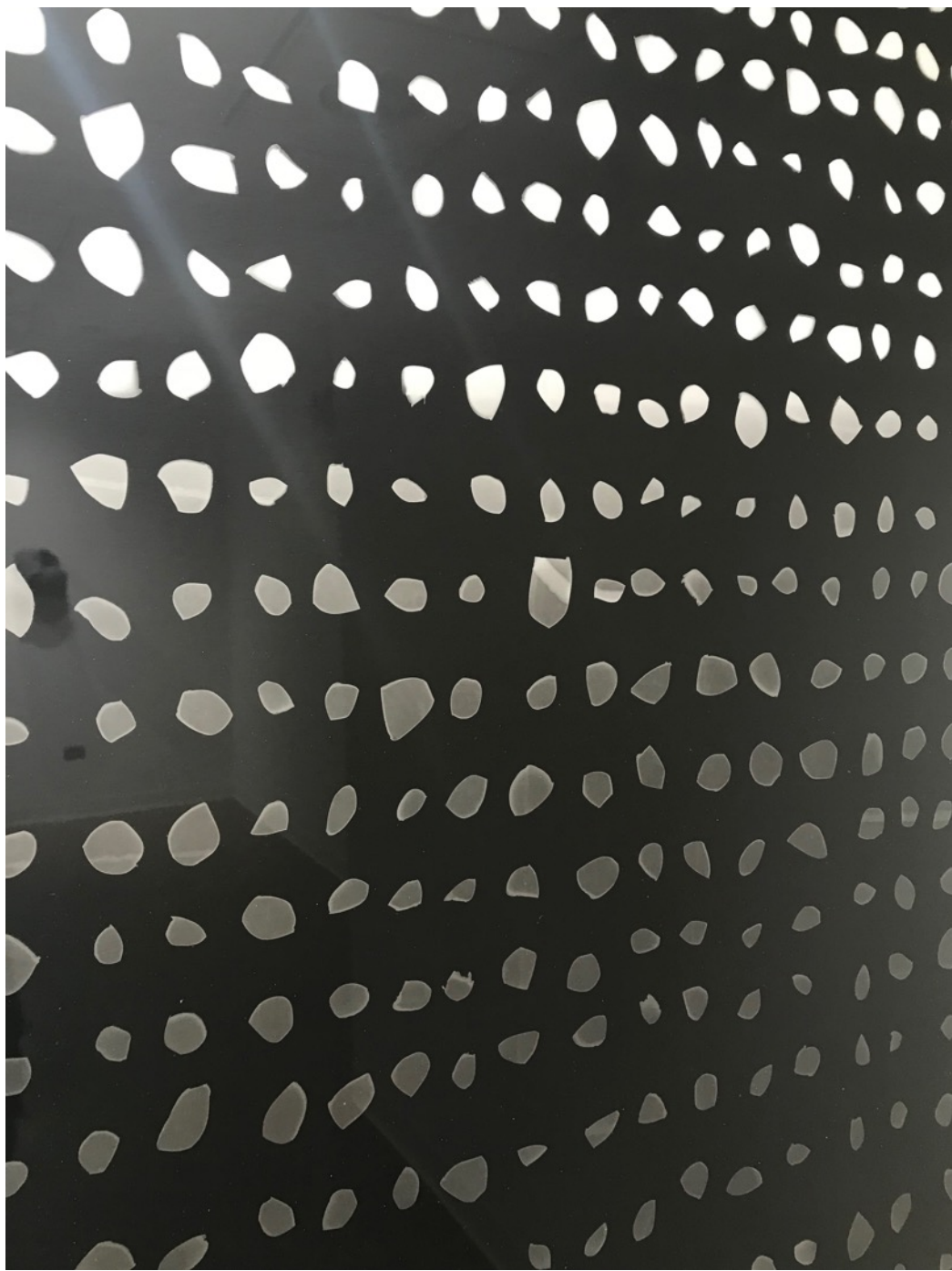
It's about
hanging
by the skin of
your teeth
by
a thread
by a nail.































Under The Influence explores the work of artists Joseph and Sarah Belknap, Daniel Hojnacki, Nazafarin Lofti, Ronny Quevedo and Juana Valdes in relation to their experiences as educators. While teaching full-time, part-time or freelancing, the experience of teaching or leading through education, positions individuals to sharing concepts and skills. Pedagogical studies often provide information on how an education lead by a practicing artist can be of positive influence to an art student. This exhibition will raise questions such as how a professional artist is impacted by their student's work, as well as how a student's work filters into the artist's professional practice.

During my years teaching art for the Chicago public and charter schools, I experienced the direct impact of students artistic manifestations. It was exiting, fresh and inspiring. I remember taking pictures of their work and taking notes about the things that exited me the most during the teaching days and bring them to my studio as source of inspiration. To me, the years teaching high school art became some of the most inspiring years of my life. I feel in love with the raw talent that, despite the lack of technique, is capable of manifesting sophistication and thoughtfulness. As a professional artist, I can determine what parts of my practice have been the most impacted by my various teaching experiences.

For the purpose of this exhibition, I have asked Joseph, Sarah, Daniel, Ronny and Juana to share with us the influences that have impacted their work while teaching. This is what they have to say:

Anika made photographs when we met her. Then she started arranging the photographs with objects on low lying tables. Chris made formal and traditional ceramics on the wheel. Then he started playing with plaster, found objects, and color - he mixed them all together into these weird and fantastical assemblages. Sen experimented with the strange and the abstract - whirling together performance and humor and materiality. Chloe found joy in her work - text and smiley faces and play. Elizabeth loved myth and nature and would meet us for lunch nearly every week while she was in school. Marcos made poetic work about his mother while powerlifting. Madison worked with EL wire and cacti. Katie transformed into a powerful performance beast. Fharid spent hours arranging the gravel in his minimalist sculptures until they were just right. Eshovo choreographed video, performance, and drawing with pure love and sensitivity. Dylan made moon rocks and a tent using plastic drop cloth and made a magical space. Raquel played intuitively and made collages with her two daughters.

Joseph and Sarah Belknap

Higher Sails, a series that transforms small businesses into social agents by broadcasting community concerns through its ephemera and store signage. Located in the Mott Haven section of The Bronx this project is aimed at creating a platform for residents to respond to the impact of gentrification through art and design. The project re-imagines existing sites of communal exchange into agents of art making and collective response. Higher Sails creates a "new" space for audiences, ranging in demographics, to converge and generate the nuanced vision of collective action. One locally owned business participates in this endeavor as client and host. As a client, their storefront awnings will be re-manufactured

and a visual identity created to serve the dual function of in-house design and socially engaged exchanges. Concurrent to this program is a 12-week teen design workshop that creates the visual identity of Higher Sails. The production of this series is supported by A Blade of Grass Fellowship.

Ronny Quevedo

When teaching my students darkroom photography, I usually begin with introducing the “photogram” technique. One of the most basic uses of a darkroom enlarger, you can use any object placed on top of the light sensitive paper and expose it to create an impression of that object for a final image. My students become very involved in this process because it allows for fast results without the use of any cameras. Simply using light as your medium. Through this continued act of teaching this process, my students would have amazing results in the density of the image and tonality. I began noticing and becoming inspired by these patterns in the workshops and began revisiting this basic fundamental technique in my own work. “Maze Attempt III & IV” are created from that age old simple yet complex varying “camera-less” process of the photogram.

Daniel Hojnacki

In the fall of 2013, the printmaking area at the previous university where I taught received a Technology Grant. The emphasizes for the grant was to integrate technology and innovation into a traditional medium. With these funds, I purchased a laser cutter and started to design assignments that use familiar software to generate images, patterns, cut shapes and ultimate imagine new ways of engraving on wood, paper, and assorted materials. Seeing my students push the boundaries of what the laser cutter could cut made me reconsider using the process to generate a negative image that would read as a positive. In the summer of 2015, while participating in the Immersion Residency at Center for New Art, William Paterson University I work with a group of students to engrave a series of nine text plates. The words are carved out and what prints is the area surrounding the text.

Juana Valdes

Vista is an abstract landscape which was inspired by teaching basic principles such as perspective, viewpoint, and composition in Drawing I classes. Encouraging students to look around and find challenging angles to make drawings made me interested in creating a piece that was not immediately accessible from the front and invited the viewers to walk around and look into the object. Teaching perspective has always been fascinating to me as so much of it is just about paying attention to our everyday perception of the environment.

Nazafarin Lotfi

Under the Influence

Curated by Edra Soto

Feb 2018 – Mar 2018

Above: Nazafarin Lotfi, *Vista*, 2016.

Opening reception: Thursday, February 22, 5-7 pm

Curator's Talk: Thursday, March 15, 4:30 - 5:30 pm, room RAA-117

All events at the Ralph Arnold Gallery are free and open to the public.

This exhibition explores the work of artists who also work as art educators and examines their various sources of inspiration. While teaching full-time, part-time or freelancing, the experience of teaching or leading through education positions individuals to share concepts and skills. Pedagogical studies often provide information on how an education lead by a practicing artist can be of positive influence to an art student.

This exhibition will raise questions such as how a professional artist is impacted by their student's work as well as how a student's work filters into the artist's professional practice.

Participating Artists:

[Sarah and Joseph Belknap](#)

[Ronny Quevedo](#)

[Nazafarin Lotfi](#)

[Daniel Hojnacki](#)

[Juana Valdes](#)

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