

## ‘Double Dare Ya’ talks gender, identity, and power

Henry Art Gallery pulls various perspectives on the experience of female youth

By Rosa Sittig-Bell Contributing writer Apr 21, 2022 0



Courtesy of Henry Art Gallery

How is the transient experience of being a young woman captured and preserved? The memories tied up in the experience of girlhood and how young women express their identity and autonomy are explored in the Henry Art Gallery’s exhibition, [“Double Dare Ya: Burns, Kurland, & Ross-Ho.”](#)

Running Feb. 4 through May 29, “Double Dare Ya” is a new exhibit in the Henry’s ongoing “Viewpoints” series, in which members of the UW community are

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encouraged to join the discourse on the artwork being exhibited. The “Viewpoints” series is organized by Nina Bozicnik, the assistant curator, and Kira Sue, a graduate curatorial assistant.

Named after the Bikini Kill song “[Double Dare Ya](#),” the exhibit dares to take a look inside the fleeting moments that shape young women, whether that be the intimacy of their thoughts or their responses through self-representation.

The exhibit began with Amanda Ross-Ho’s heavily-worn and graffitied pieces based on an abandoned backpack, “Untitled (SIMPLE PLAN)” and “Untitled (MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE),” which emerged from a [previous soft sculpture of a teenage girl’s backpack](#). The two pieces from Ross-Ho steered curators in the direction of incorporating photography pieces by Marsha Burns and Justine Kurland that navigate female adolescence and their spaces for self-expression.

“That [theme] became how we were looking at the photographs by Marsha Burns and then the photograph by Justine Kurland of these ways that young women find space to articulate and express themselves,” Bozicnik said. “[In] the case of the photographs by Marsha Burns, it’s through dress and it’s through gesture, and Marsha is capturing that kind of sensibility. And then with the Kurland, it’s more staged photographs, these sort of narrative scenes. But, what’s kind of suggested by these young women in these dark woods is an articulation of their agency.”



Amanda Ross-Ho, *Untitled (MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE)*, 2013. Acrylic on dyed canvas. Courtesy of the Henry Art Gallery.

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The pieces in the exhibit are Ross-Ho's experiments with material, abstraction, and memory, along with Burns's 1980s portraits of female adolescence in the punk scene and Kurland's cinematic photographs of teenage girls.

"There's definitely a conversation happening about representation and abstraction of identities within the works and across the works," Bozicnik said.

"Viewpoints" includes interpretations from Kari Lerum, professor in the School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences at UW Bothell; Debi Talukdar, doctoral student in the College of Education; and undergraduate student Ilah Walker.

"Ilah mentioned that there's not usually much space for young women's musings, but the[re's the] reminder that [the ephemeral] would not necessarily have been considered worth preserving, but they were, and that was a choice by the artists, by the women, to preserve that identity; that itself interacts with power, the power to be remembered or to be forgotten," Sue said. "Whose thoughts, whose exploits, whose identities get recorded over time? It's the type of power, definitely."