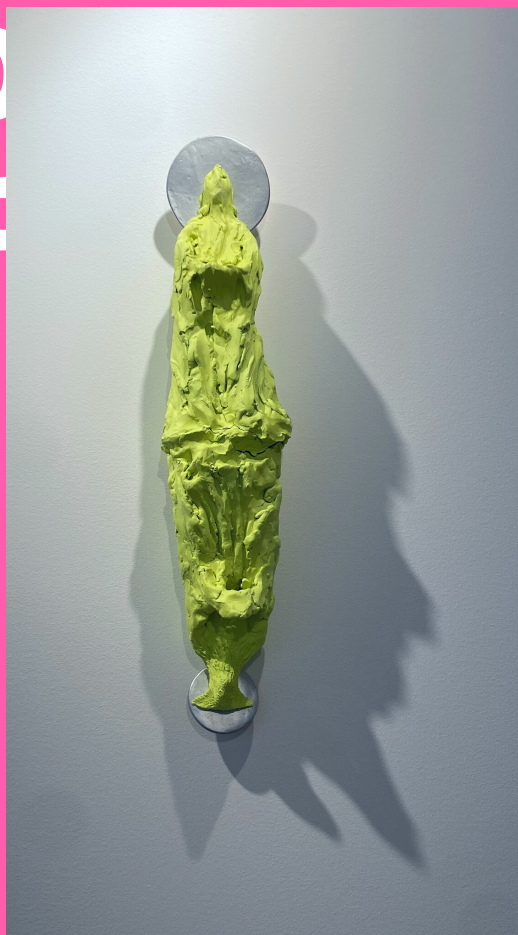


# Lips & Friends Lips & Friends



Gallery Exhibition | 2022

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# Letter from the Director



While dreaming about all this gallery space could be during the spring of 2021, I scribbled in my notebook "I want our students to know our faculty not just as mentors but as artists." This show is our first step in revealing ourselves as artists — beginning with Mr. Lips.

We view art as a vehicle for self-expression, creative freedom, and as serving the purpose of reflecting the full spectrum of diversity that exists both within and outside our PHS community. We see the arts as opening the possibility of expanding our view of the world and creating thought-provoking opportunities for robust discussion.

All are welcome to explore, question, and, yes, critique the art presented in the gallery. We invite people to come in the spirit of wonderment and appreciation for the time, effort, and sacrifice artists have given to expand our collective worldview. Please use the sticky notes and pencils provided in this exhibition to respond to the work.

May the work inspire you to find what lives in the space between people,

*Caro Thomas*

Caro Thomas '13  
Gallery Director



# Lips & Friends: The Process of Becoming

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Embracing this gallery as a teaching space, I am presenting work in the process of becoming—resisting explaining what it means. I urge you to respond to the art in your own way. Much of this work is very new and departs from my familiar ways of working. I'm not even sure what it's all about yet.

My hope in the presentation of unresolved work is that students see the stumbling awkwardness of creation as the work grasps for a place to settle and mature. Some works were made as educational objects, existing at the intersection of my artistic and teaching practices. Other objects were made over twenty years ago when I was only a few years older than our current seniors.

It was around that time in life I met the other artists in the show—artists who are lifelong friends, family, collaborators, and teachers. I contest that art emerges not from the individual but from the space between people. This show invites you to discover connections between you and the art as well as between my work and that of the other artists.

While this new work is still finding its way, understanding one's own creation is a process that can take a humbling amount of time. Ideas need to steep, marinate, and merge with others to become what they want to be. Ideas are whispering to you, asking you to make time and space to bring them into existence.

Will you allow yourself to hear them?

-Mr. Lips

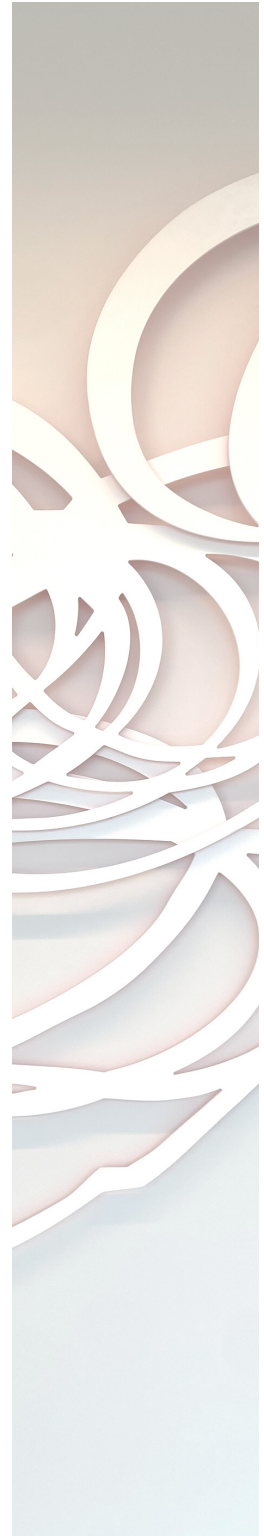
# Jean Schmitt: VISIBLE INVISIBLE Vulture Lines

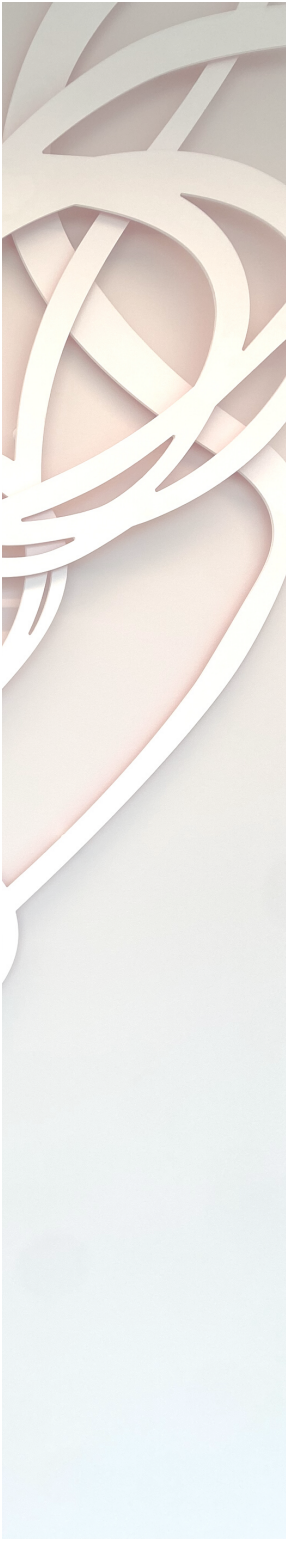
By Jean Schmitt

I lie on my back and gaze up to watch the kettling vultures catching thermals under their wings. I think about the vulture as a symbol of transformation, and I consider how our present moment calls us to act toward a better future. I look into my worm bin and marvel at how this subterranean creative community converts scrap into healthy soil where a world of possibilities will grow.

Ascension, activation, gestural line. The Visible, Invisible series features gestural lines extracted from video footage of vultures circling on thermal air currents. As vultures ascend, they reveal the invisible tunnels of air-producing spirals that I capture and convert into vector lines. By converting vulture flight into this algorithmic numerical data we can imagine these lines with varied scales and materials.

I am investigating shared work as productive action, whether that is within a worm bin, a compost heap or in artistic processes. The Visible, Invisible digital fabrication series captures imperfections in nature, technology, and artist. The work inscribes actions of the bird, the thermal, the video camera, the computer, the laser cutter, CNC router, 3d printer, technical partners, and me. Inter-actions in beauty and imperfection expressed in color, line, and process create a bridge to resilience.





# FROM VULTURINE TO VERMICULAR

My obsession with vultures is now paralleled by an obsession with worms. One recycler soaring to great heights and the other representing subterranean realms. My studio is full of vulture line experiments accumulating into something resembling the worm bin (vermicular). 3d printed spirals imagine what the thermal looks like in sculptural form and laser cut vulture lines in beech plywood, MDF, and chip board are waiting to be bent or reassembled into new forms. The lines will never be scientifically accurate as they involve camera angles, digital processing the artists imagination, a digital fabrication team and the limitations of the laser cutter, 3d printer, or CNC router. I am drawn to the beauty and imperfection in nature, technology, and teamwork.

Worm related words are some of the best out there. Collective nouns like a a "wriggle of worms" or "squirm of worms" are fun to say! These CNC routed words were pulled from the Oxford English Dictionary. You might try dropping Vermicular (of or relating to the processes of worms) and vermiform (resembling or having the the form of a worm) into casual conversation. The script font borrows from the visual language of neon signs and when superimposed also looks like a wriggle of worms. I dream that critics will someday write, "She was searching for her vermicular vernacular." But if you call it worm art, that's okay too.

This thinking wall is an opportunity to play. There is little to no pre-thought in the configurations. Allowing spontaneous connects to spark new directions is one way artists can break away from prescribed thinking.

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# The Space Between People

By Jason Lips

## Tom

Tom Meuninck was my high school ceramics teacher and greatly informed my own approach to teaching. He was a phenomenal craftsman, spoke in riddles, and granted us tremendous creative freedom. After graduating high school, anytime I would return to my hometown I made an effort to visit with Tom. We would spend hours together in his home, studio, and walking around his forested property, talking about art, education, and life. One of the last times I visited him, I took my son Judah. Tom gave us these ceramic armadillos as gifts, one for each of us. Tom died in 2019 from lung cancer.

## Haley

Haley and I met in 2001 at the Kansas City Art Institute where she majored in Creative Writing and Interdisciplinary Art and have been together ever since. She and I are very different artists. For one, she lacks the obsessive, paralyzing perfectionism that I have to fight off daily to get anything done. This I truly admire. All of Haley's creative work lands an emotional punch through its honest exploration of relationships and memories. Both works included here are about some of her closest childhood friendships.





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# Thank You



This gallery relies upon the collaboration and care from our entire Pembroke Hill community. In particular, we would like to thank the following collaborators:

PHS Arts Faculty  
Courtney Peterson, Bruce Crouch, and our entire facilities team  
Jonathan Kemper  
Bill and Christy Gautreaux  
PHS Gallery Committee  
PHS Arts Council  
Brad Shelley  
Mike Hill  
Titan Security

We couldn't do it without you!

Thanks,  
Caro Thomas '13  
Gallery Director



# Lips & Friends

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Gallery Exhibition | Feb 2022  
Curated by Caro Thomas &  
Jason Lips

Work by Jason Lips, Haley Lips,  
Jean Schmitt, Francisco Ormaza,  
Jordan Greiger, and Tom  
Meuninck

Exhibition Program designed  
and edited by Caro Thomas