

# 2021 UNDERGRADUATE FINE ART THESIS EXHIBITION

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## AMANDA ADELA



## DEPS ARTIST PROFILE SERIES

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MAY 10 - MAY 26 2021

# DETRITUS AND DESIRE: 2021 UNDERGRADUATE FINE ARTS THESIS EXHIBITION

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Detritus and Desire: the 2021 Undergraduate Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition features the works of four BFA candidates in Columbia's Fine Arts program. The exhibition, which includes drawings, prints, books, video, performance, and installation, represents the culmination of four years' worth of development of a cohesive body of work for each artist while earning their degrees. Taking place at C33 Gallery during Columbia's Manifest festival, this edition of the DEPS Artist Profile series is a way to connect audiences with the artists of the exhibition and give you an in-depth look into the processes and ideas that have informed this body of work.

**Participating Artists:** Darby Jack, iph, Amanda Adela, and Miranda Randel

# AMANDA ADELA

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Amanda Adela's current project is heavily reliant on process and the idea of making in a meditative and almost obsessive way as a form of coping with the new realities that have occurred in the past year. This, and her inability to work on her larger scale works, is how this project began—"if you can't go big, why not go really small?" The idea of being resourceful and working with what you have is also part of how Adela came to use 'baby' etching plates, using scraps of metal from her place of work in the college's printmaking facility from which to make the plates. This focus on materiality and process has extended to the remainder of her work.

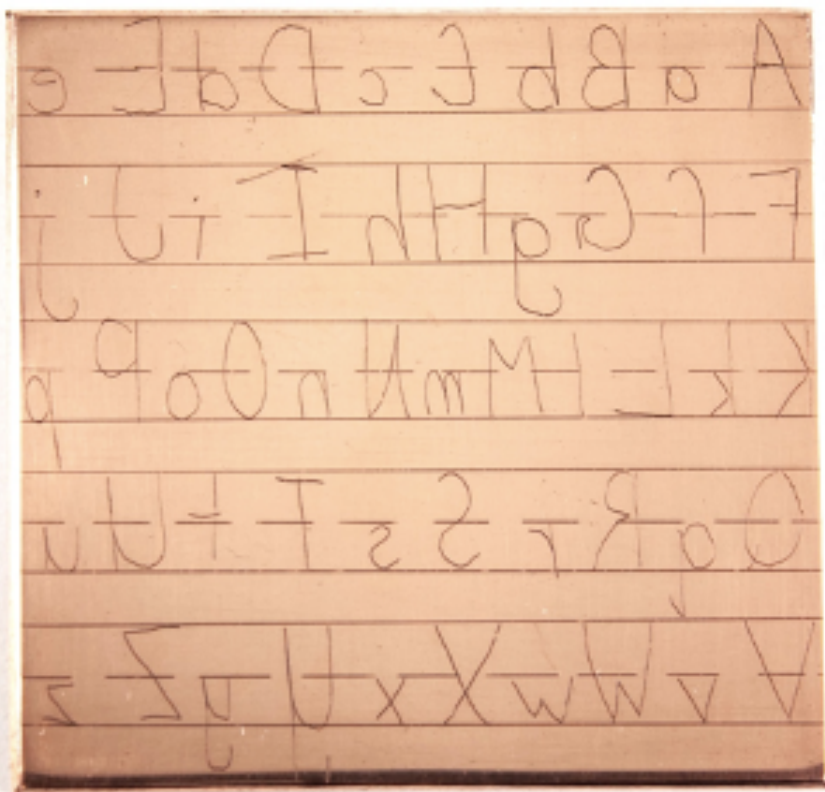
The imagery in her etchings is collectively more about focusing on continuing to make work and getting lost in the meticulous process of etching. Adela's ADD lends itself well to the amount of detail this process requires, and she uses it to her advantage here, allowing herself to become lost in the line making in one plate and jump into another when the idea comes to mind, and ultimately preparing them in a similar way to an assembly line.

**Amanda Adela** is a multimedia artist originally from Texas. Her work revolves around themes of communication, feminism and health issues including pain and chronic illness, and she draws inspiration from surrealism, pop art, and her own environment. As someone who experiences physical and mental health issues, Amanda will often use her work as a way to open up a conversation about these topics as well as to work through her struggles in a constructive manner. Amanda's style is a mix of realism and abstraction/minimalism and lately, rather than focusing on imagery, she has been concentrating on process.

[@amanda.adela.art](https://www.instagram.com/amanda.adela.art)



*Abstract, 2020*  
Etching



*Alphabet*, 2021  
Etched copper plate



*Cloudy*, 2020  
Etching with relief roll, gouache, pen, graphite



*Lost at Sea, 2021*  
Etching



*Double Overprint, 2021*  
Multiple plate etching



# INTERVIEW WITH AMANDA ADELA

Conducted by Kaylee Fowler

**Kaylee Fowler:** You stated that recently you have shifted from a focus on imagery to concentrating more on process; What inspired this shift, and has this shift caused you to look at your work in a new way?

**Amanda Adela:** A lot of reasons, honestly. One reason is just rooted in my curiosity and desire to try new things constantly-I tend to become bored quickly doing the same thing for too long and love to learn how I can use the skills I have in more unconventional ways. I have so much access at the school at the moment and, over the past four years, have slowly acquired a number of skills and authorizations for tools on campus, but have never thought about how I can use them in conjunction with my practice or take advantage of them while I still have access, and wanted to change that. I also have been struggling with burnout this past semester, trying to come up with new imagery has been difficult. This led me to use a lot of repetition in my work, which has helped to push me to be more creative in how I repeat imagery and allowed my shift in focus from what I'm making to what I'm using to make and how I can use all these tools at my disposal and just have fun playing with materials and with the process of research and experimentation.

**KF:** What are some of the visual imagery you have worked with in the past, and what are some of the concepts you explore with the symbolism you use? Do these images translate across medium and scale for you, or do you find yourself drawn to different imagery depending on what you are working on?

**AA:** There's a handful of things that I tend to cycle through and come back to later in my work, which carry throughout my work despite what medium(s) I work in. My work revolves around themes of communication, feminism, chronic pain, physical and mental health issues, creating as a way of meditating, and most recently, thinking about the past and pulling imagery from there. In saying that, most of my work tends to be less direct about the messages and leans towards minimalism/abstraction in that sense. The most used symbol I'd say I use is definitely the mouth, which can symbolize lots of things to me depending on the day, such as struggles with communication with others, with the past and having a loss of control/power in my own life. I also have been using my line art as a representation of the way I see my mind working and my train of thought as someone who has ADD. Other imagery can come from everyday/ordinary objects, the body, and technology.

**KF:** You've also recently shifted from working on a large scale to working really small for the etchings in this project; does this shift in scale affect the conceptual aspect of your work too?

**AA:** I actually didn't realize it, but I would say it has changed the work I have been making subconsciously. Partially because the shift from painting to etching changes the style I use, going from realism to line work, but also, the smaller scale changes how things are viewed; the amount of detail you can include without cluttering the imagery and working at a faster pace caused most of the imagery to become simpler and more minimal, and has led me to experiment more with abstraction.

# INTERVIEW CONTINUED

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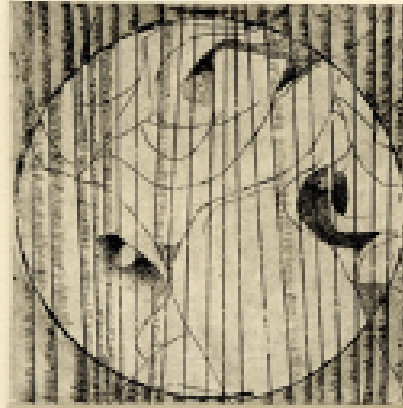
**KF:** How has this shift to smaller scale and accessibility in work changed your perspective on what a sustainable practice looks like? Do you think some of the changes you have made to your practice during the pandemic will still carry over once large-scale works become more accessible again?

**AA:** Although I was raised to be resourceful and use what I have available, it has made me more appreciative for the access and resources I have and led me to pay more attention to them, especially the resources that were left from others—scraps sitting in a drawer, which I saw as an opportunity. I love being able to use scraps and stuff from others and have become better at doing so in my practice. I have also become less afraid to push the boundaries and more innovative and experimental in trying things out, even if I think it won't work, and have made some pretty amazing things this way. I think my awareness of what I have around me and creativity in how to use things in a new way is something I will definitely continue in my practice after all this is over.

**KF:** What is something you are looking forward to for the upcoming year and for your practice post-graduation?

**AA:** I know it'll be hard this next year, but I'm looking forward to not having such a rigorous schedule—I'm excited to have the time to work on projects I've been coming up with from all the experimentation I've been doing, to have a studio practice outside school and to actually go back and develop some of my work more.

# DEPS ARTIST PROFILE SERIES



The DEPS Artist Profile Series, presented by Columbia College Chicago's Department of Exhibitions, Performance, and Student Spaces (DEPS), is a virtual publication on select artists involved with the DEPS Galleries and the Columbia College Chicago community. Our goal with this series is to connect artist and viewer on a deeper level, and to highlight the amazing works and thoughts of our featured artists through interviews, artist biographies, and catalogs of work. Art has always been a way to connect with others, no matter where one may physically be. We hope by presenting the creativity and insights of the people involved in the DEPS Artist Profile Series that viewers may have one more way to stay in touch with and support the arts community.

The DEPS Artist Profile Series is managed by Fine Arts major and DEPS Exhibitions Assistant Kaylee Fowler. This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

Learn more at [colum.edu](http://colum.edu)

C33 Gallery  
33 Ida B Wells Dr, 1st Floor, Chicago, IL 60605  
Gallery Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Capacity of gallery is 10 visitors, and masks are required.

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