



Richard Tuschman, *Woman Reading* (from the series *Hopper Meditations*), archival pigment print

Yolanda Sánchez, *Awake Awhile*, oil on canvas



# QUESTIONS + ANSWERS

Selected works by 2020 Penland School instructors | March 24–May 3, 2020



**PENLAND**  
GALLERY

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PENLAND SCHOOL OF CRAFT

Front, clockwise from left: Jaydan Moore, Shiyuan Xu,  
Megan Biddle, Del Harrow, Sylvie Rosenthal, Harriet Hoover



Elizabeth Alexander  
Megan Biddle  
Maegan Crowley  
Del Harrow  
Hong Hong  
Harriet Hoover  
Mo Kelman  
Jaydan Moore  
Sylvie Rosenthal  
Yolanda Sánchez  
Richard Tuschman  
Shiyuan Xu

**From left:** Elizabeth Alexander, *Traditional Victorian Rose*, cut wallpaper, laminate cast paper, glue, 8-ply mat board; Maegan Crowley, *Divided*, forged / fabricated steel, 24K gold leaf



## Questions + Answers

*Keep yourself away from the answers, but alive in the middle of the questions.*

Colum McCann, author and co-founder of Narrative 4

It could be said that at the heart of creativity is mindful uncertainty. A voyage in uncharted waters begins by letting go of the safety of known territory, balancing risk with skill and fear with hunger. And so it is with the artist's mind—heading off to satiate creative wanderlust, find new solutions to unsolvable mysteries, and untangle intelligent potential from webs of preposterous ideas.

In hopes of understanding the enigmatic artistic mind, we often ask an artist for their roadmap or creative route to the final work. Where did this idea come from? Why did you land here? There is usually no one single answer. Instead it is an internal dialogue consisting of multiple questions and answers. An immense part of a creative practice is in the questioning, a step in the process, letting instinct be the guide with uncertainty hovering on the horizon.

The artists in this exhibition are independent thinkers and flexible problem solvers. They use their imagination to form meaningful ideas and feed their curiosity. As educators, they lead by example.

Within the transparency of immersive education at schools such as Penland, they provide space and leadership for students to experience the question and answer process—advancing innovation and vision before logic.

Divergent thinking is a non-linear process used to generate ideas—a spontaneous, random exploration of many possible solutions. To teach divergent thinking (with the goal of achievable outcomes) is at the core of craft education. Artists must learn to respond to their own curiosity, see value in mistakes, and find connections between seemingly unrelated elements. Teaching and learning a craft embraces the skill of query and investigation—working in a space where for that moment, there are no wrong answers.

*I usually have a question. There's usually a question that I've asked myself, and I can't answer. The writing is the way that I begin to find many answers to that question. On the whole, if we ask ourselves interesting questions as writers, we will have interesting answers.*

From *The Creative Independent*, interview with Deborah Levy by Maddie Crum

Kathryn Gremley  
Director, Penland Gallery