

An MFA Thesis Show...

Substitute Equal Amounts

...in two parts

Part 2

May 28 - June 15

Alice Ding

Magicfeifei

Drew Parkinson

Eleonore Zurawski



*She is the masterpiece of the ancient superiority of the
unproductive. She neither begets, nor works, but drifts.*

—Lisa Robertson

The cutesy bows, eyes, lips, and accessorizations of Magicfeifei’s works are an incisive remixing of signifiers and artifacts originating from the “magical girl” trope—popularized in 1990s mangas by the likes of Sailor Moon or Cardcaptor Sakura. Through sculpture, Magicfeifei develops a preciously adorable articulation of vengeance and consumption that preempts a perverse sublimation: producing desire in such excess that the boundaries of the magical girl’s subjecthood supersede one’s own.

Alice Ding’s practice manages a difficult pas de deux between the exact and the louche. Her drawings and instant photographs of computerized glyphs are delightfully simple on their surface but express a thalassic multitude of refusals. They refuse easy explanations in spite of their superficiality. They refuse to be unique in spite of their utter singularity. They would even refuse art if refusal itself was not art’s greatest tool for affirmation. Simply put, Ding’s work is sharply imprecise and cool to the touch; it is the impersonality of the mind as it approaches something deflatingly human.

Drew Parkinson’s paintings are deeply rooted in the studio and the negotiations that occur between an artist, history, and the question of what may or may not be permitted to continue. Parkinson’s canvases take their example from those schools of thought buried under the scrap heap of globalized contemporary art: American regionalism and the transcendental painters of the early twentieth century. In this, Parkinson affirms his position as a Midwesterner and as someone concerned with the matters of both earthly and divine concern, while also accepting painting as a meager but inevitable vehicle for such investigations.

Eleonore Zurawski’s elegiac meditations on the Midwestern prairie landscape call to mind the Keatsian conflict of awe and righteous indignation in the face of humanity’s effect on the natural world. Through carefully formulated strategies for display, Zurawski troubles the line distinction between specimen and body, between scientific detachment and mournful sentimentality. At the juncture of post-industrialism and ecological collapse, a bitter question emerges from Zurowski’s varnished plants and corroded steel: how can things be otherwise if we continue to avoid looking?

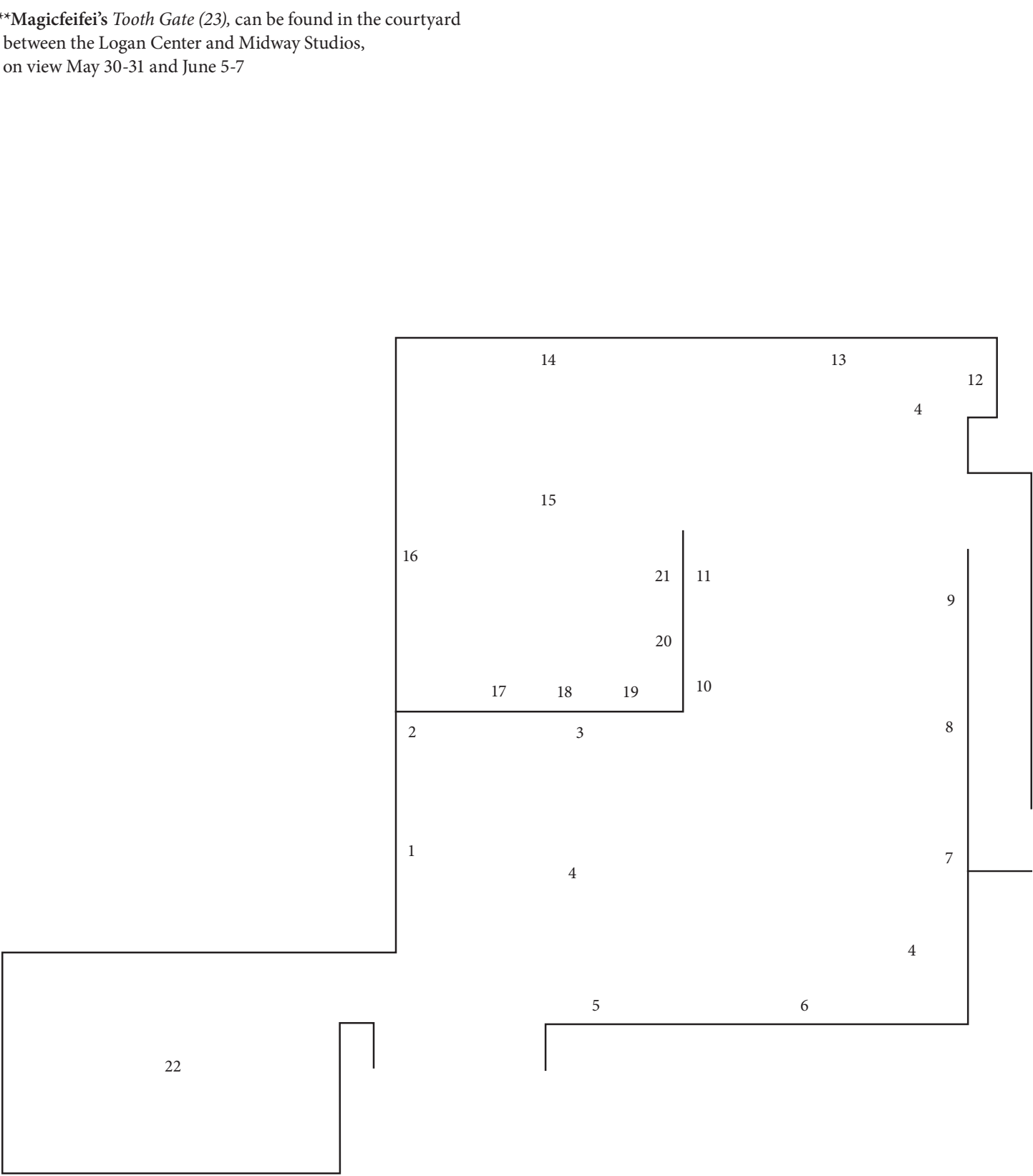
Syntactical and formal divergences notwithstanding, Magicfeifei, Alice Ding, Drew Parkinson, and Eleonore Zurawski’s practices are each linked by an impulse to draft a character primed to rebuff the projections they are prone to solicit. For Magicfeifei, it is the magical girl; for Ding, it is the artist; for Parkinson, it is history; for Zurawski, it is the landscape. These may seem more like archetypal concepts than they do characters. After all, shouldn’t one expect a character to have just that—character?

But, in this instance, “character” does not mark a set of objects in possession of some particular moral or narrative content. What is at hand is anterior to such things; it is more like the threshold to content’s container, an outline that expresses something at once definitive but stubbornly fugitive. By substituting the viscera of interiority for more furtive contours, Magicfeifei, Ding, Parkinson, and Zurawski leave their audience with a draft of character: inscrutable figures graciously unfurnished by the burden of qualities beyond their airs.

- GTK, May 2025

Title List

1	Eleonore Zurawski <i>found mountainscape</i> , 2024 Inkjet print on tracing paper	11	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2025 Ink on paper	19	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2025 Dye transfer print
2	Magicfeifei <i>Toothgap and Magicwand</i> , 2024 Foam, drywall, plaster, paint, readymade	12	Magicfeifei <i>Suck It Up, Buttercup!</i> , 2025 Princess TV, media player, gif	20	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2024 Dye transfer print
3	Magicfeifei <i>Mount Huaguo</i> , 2024 Oce print	13	Drew Parkinson <i>The Pequot</i> , 2025 Cyanotype and chalk on paper	21	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2024 Oil on print
4	Magicfeifei <i>Magic Girl Gaze</i> , 2025 Mylar balloons, vinyl Special thanks: Laveen Gammie	14	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2025 Ink, print, tyvek	22	Eleonore Zurawski <i>lost at a lawn</i> , 2025 Dandelions, found tiles, sewing pins, grow lights, plywood
5	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2025 Acrylic and ink on print	15	Drew Parkinson <i>50 Borrowed Rocks</i> , 2024	23	Magicfeifei** <i>Tooth Gate</i> , 2025 Fabric, air blower (on view May 30-31 and June 5-7)
6	Magicfeifei <i>Untitled</i> , 2025 Acrylic, fabric, fiber fill, plush toy, food residue, wood Special thanks: Isaac Yuquan Duan and Zj Pan	16	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2025 Inkjet print		
7	Drew Parkinson <i>Freeze</i> , 2025 Acrylic and chalk on paper	17	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2025 Inkjet print, tyvek, wood panel		
8	Drew Parkinson <i>Bricktown</i> , 2025 Acrylic and chalk on paper	18	Alice Ding <i>Untitled</i> , 2024 Ink on print		
9	Drew Parkinson <i>Flood</i> , 2025 Acrylic and chalk on paper				
10	Eleonore Zurawski <i>parts of a landscape</i> , 2025 Found plants, plaster				



Additional artworks on view in Logan Center first floor hallway