

# ALTERED LANDSCAPES 2018

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## IMAGINING UTOPIA: BLUEPRINTS FOR INTENT AND DISSENT

Organizer: Susanna Crum

### Participants:

Brendan Baylor, Susanna Crum, James Ehlers, Fleming Jeffries, Sarah Marshall, Edie Overturf, Joshua Johnson, Jennaway Pearson, Kyle Peets, Rachel Singel, Emily Stokes, Betsy Stout, Lizzy Taber, Corinne Teed, Erik Waterkotte

### Abstract

In Margaret Atwood's novel, "A Handmaid's Tale", a leader in the book's dystopian society says, "Better never means better for everyone. It always means worse for some." Whereas historical and contemporary concepts of "utopia" often include guided tours through imagined societies and ideal communities, print-based artists have a long history of creating visual statements that expose stories and perspectives that counter the status quo. In the 501 years since Thomas More published "Utopia", printmaking has stood at the intersection of life and art – mobilized by artists and activists as tools to enact social change, broaden worldviews, and make stories of lesser-represented people visible to the largest possible audience.

Simulation meets stimulation in the constructed landscape of Las Vegas, where visitors suspend reality as they visit likenesses in miniature of Venice, Paris, and ancient Rome. Artists featured in "Imaging Utopia: Blueprints for Intent and Dissent" utilize a broad range of hand-pulled printmaking techniques, from hand-drawn and photomechanical processes in silkscreen, lithography, intaglio, and relief to propose new models for social realities. Whether utopic or dystopic, their prints point to the myriad ways that print-based media continue to spread a diverse range of ideas and perspectives to reimagine, revise, or resist our present social landscapes.