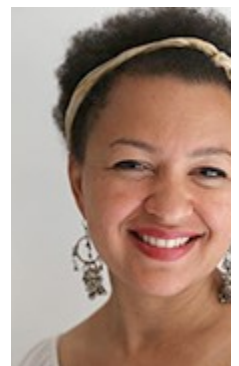


In Motion: Io Palmer reflects the complex

Born on Hydra, a motorless Greek island off the coast of the Peloponnese, **Io Palmer**, associate professor of fine arts, grew up among the donkeys, the fishes, the clear blue Mediterranean sea, and the jazz music her parents listened to.

Trained originally as a ceramicist, she uses a variety of processes and materials, including fabric, steel, sound, and wood, to explore complex issues of class, capitalism, and societal excess. Palmer teaches art foundations, ceramics, performance, and sculpture at WSU and has completed artist residencies in locations across the United States and Asia, including the Kathmandu Contemporary Art Center in Nepal, the Sanskriti Foundation in New Delhi, and the Art Channel Artist Residency in Beijing.



Io Palmer

How did you go from living on an island in Greece to becoming an artist and professor at WSU?

My parents were both incredibly dedicated to their personal creative practices. As a child I was given great freedom by both of them to wander and find my interests. When they split, we returned to the states and the adventure continued. I lived with my mom through high school and then with my father for a bit until I went off to art school. After that I learned from very accomplished people and realized that I could have this path.

What drives your interest in social issues and how does your art help to address them?

As a person of mixed heritage—my mother is Jewish and my father is black—I feel I see the world from a different perspective. Growing up I was either too black or too white or not Jewish enough. I feel I can impart some compassion and neutrality to understanding the polarities of class and

race. I hope my work provides a new perspective.

How does incorporating family and friends into your art inform the finished work?

Using my life and interests in my work makes it closer to my personal truth and thereby a clearer representation of my position in the world.

Do you have any special memories from exhibitions of your art?

I've experienced a few snafus—it's interesting how they can happen. I've had work not show up, work not return, and payments arrive one year late. Sometimes communicating about how to install or package work can get confusing, too.

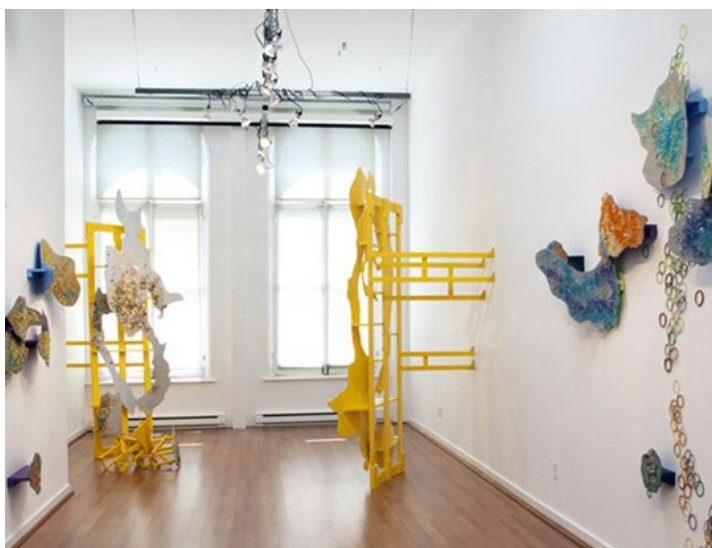
I've also had enriching experiences because of the work I do—travels to remarkable countries, such as India and Japan—and meeting other creative and critical thinkers from all over the globe.

What's among your favorite research experiences?

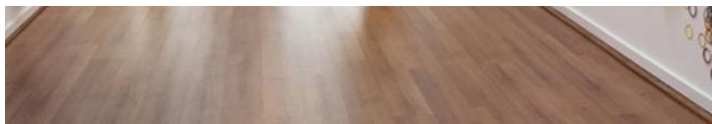
The residency I did at James Washington Foundation in Seattle was pretty unusual. I got to stay at the estate of a hardworking, lower-middleclass, black man who had the foresight to set up his home as a historical monument and a foundation for artist residencies. It was amazing to live in his home that had been



Above: detail from Io Palmer's "Access/Excess," 2014; below: details from Palmer's "Deep Water Horizon," 2014-2015.



outfitted for a post-civil rights black neighborhood in a contemporarily gentrified community. It made me more aware of more local issues



surrounding race and class in Seattle, and the space itself allowed me to experiment with me specifically steel construction.

What do you especially enjoy about teaching?

I respond to students who are interested in art making and who challenge themselves to be critical thinkers and intellectually informed citizens.

Where is your current and future art headed?

Lately I've been making a series of very large (10 feet) mixed-media drawings that reference i of pools, holes, climate changes, and environmental disasters. These drawings then have har sculptural forms floating around them, such as basketball hoops and ceramic objects. I've als started a series of videos of me cleaning a variety of sinks—from basic domestic sinks to industrial studio sinks.

My interests now are more mixed media drawings—slowly moving away from larger sculptur objects. Conceptually, I will continue on the path I have been on by creating work that is infor by class structures, labor, and environmental issues.

And, on a lighter note, what won't you leave home without?

A picture of my husband and his cat—okay, just his cat—along with lipstick, lotion, my pocketknife, a sketchbook, and my pens.

Check out some of Io Palmer's recent work on her website

- Access/Excess
- Deep Water Horizon

