

**Self Made**

# Exeter exhibition explores themes of beauty, power, and desire



Exploring a sense of the “Self Made,” an exhibition at the Lamont Gallery at Phillips Exeter Academy features more than 40 works that focus on themes of beauty, power, desire and change.

Caleb Cole, Lauren Kalman, Cybèle Mendes and Tara Misenheimer will share their artistic visions in the showing, which runs from Monday, Sept. 8, through Saturday, Oct. 18. A reception will take place from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 26, with a gallery talk planned for 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 27.

The exhibit features a variety of materials and methods, including photography, gold, paint and printmaking.

In Cole’s series, “Other People’s Clothes,” the photographer wears borrowed, bought or found clothes to create “narratives of isolation, of questioning and searching, of desire, and of confusion.” Cole, of Somerville, Mass., observes people in everyday life, imagines their stories and recreates a moment of transition in their lives.

“This moment is the time right before something changes, the holding in of a breath and waiting, the preparing of oneself for what is to come,” she said.

Kalman’s work investigates “how the pursuit of human beauty has left its mark on the body.” Trained as a jeweler, she considers the prosthetic possibilities of gold as a self-enhancement strategy. Her “Crime Hoods” series presents images structured as portraits, with the sitter’s identity masked behind fiber head coverings ornamented with gold.

“In my work, hooding explores displays of power and oppression,” said the Michigan artist.

“There is an intimacy and vulnerability to the work in ‘Self Made,’” said Lauren O’Neal, director and curator of the Lamont Gallery. “The images invite us to examine, reconsider and even resist socially-defined expectations for appearance.”

Mendes, of Delaware, explores identity through photographic self-portraits framed by race, gender and family history.

“In the past, my work came from a place of self-interest, as it served me first,” she said. “Now that I have fewer questions about who I am or what that voice is, my work comes from me instead of simply being about me.”

A painter and printmaker, Misenheimer, who chairs Phillips Exeter Academy’s art department, draws inspiration from vintage fashion magazines, graphic design and advertising to explore beauty, identity and gender with an eye for “intriguing juxtapositions and isolations.”

Misenheimer has additional works on view this fall at the Curator Gallery in Chelsea, N.Y.

For more information, visit [www.exeter.edu/lamontgallery](http://www.exeter.edu/lamontgallery) or call 777-3461. Hours at the gallery, located in the Frederick R. Mayer Art Center, 11 Tan Lane, are Mondays from 1 to 5 p.m. and Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is no admission fee.



ON DISPLAY: This oil-on-canvas piece by Tara Misenheimer is titled “Sergio Valente: Ideas pour la Tete, Hoops.”