

Artist Statement

Miriam MacMillan '25 (L&S Fine Art)

2025 UCSB Alumni Awards Gala

This artwork revolves around the representations of identity, queer culture, and community through imagery and narratives historically seen in media portraying surf and beach culture, and queering those heteronormative landscapes. For my research, I primarily used UCSB's archival collection of media such as magazines, advertisements, manuscripts, screenplays, photographs, film stills, and articles, that placed surfing as their central focus. In my research, I found representations that I related to were vacant from these sources/spaces, those being women, LGBTQ+, and other groups that didn't fit the stereotypical straight white blonde "surfer-dude" archetype. Through painting I reference archival imagery, and use the freedom of complete narrative control to create androgynous forms, removing physical identifiers to leave the impression of a spirit, to insinuate a more encompassing identity that more people can see themselves within.