

—Press Release—for immediate release—Press Release—

A GIFT, Images, words and intimacy, pedagogy labor and practice
Curated by Ernest A. Bryant III, for CRITICISM + VALUE, Experimental Pedagogy & Contemporary Art
Space: A collaboration with TIMM Architecture, and Tbilisi State Academy of Arts.



Location: Kote Afkhazi 18/2, Tbilisi, Georgia
Exhibition Dates: August 7, 2026
Opening Reception: August 7, 2026 | 18:00 –
Admission: All events are free and open to the public

Related events:

(Dates to be announced)

>> Orpheu Negro, 1959 (100 minutes) Directed by Marcel Camus

>> Reading and workshop with student-artists

>> Lecture and conversation with curator Ernest A. Bryant III

A GIFT, the second exhibition at Criticism + Value, Experimental Pedagogical & Contemporary Art Space, includes works of art, and writing from student-artists that participated in the open course led by guest lecturer Ernest A. Bryant III, NYU Gallatin School of Interdisciplinary Studies, for Apollon Kutateladze Tbilisi State Academy of Arts. The exhibition assembles eleven works on paper made between 1851 and 2026. From Emile Horace Vernet (France), Käthe Kollwitz (Germany), Wayne Hodge (USA), Ernest A. Bryant III (USA), Joaquín Bolívar Thomas (Cuba) and hasabie kidanu (Ethiopia/ USA). The exhibition also contains an unattributed, Japanese Shunga painting, and a piece of American domestic intelligence ephemera. This exhibition developed from a pedagogical approach, which treats these artworks and objects as the “primary text” in a sixteen week experimental course. That course and research led to the exhibition *A GIFT*.

Half of the exhibition consists of works on paper: engraving, lithography, linography, polymer plate printing, ink painting, and ball-point pen drawing. The second half of the exhibition consists of various form of writing operating as image/ object + text juxtapositions, détournement and more. Détournement was developed in the 1950's and pioneered by the *Letterists*—a French avant-garde movement that was founded in Paris by Romanian poet and visual artist, Isidore Isou (Isidor Goldstein), and later taken up by the *Situationists International*, then later theorized by Guy Debord, and Gil G. Wolman, in their 1956 text “A User's Guide to Détournement” (Mode d'emploi du détournement). In addition to détournement, the written augmentations utilize Surrealist literary strategies, Dadaist strategies, enthymeme, contemporary meme, and other contemporary strategies unique to the student-artists and curator. These image/object-and-text juxtapositions are not wholly unfamiliar to us. One of the most familiar examples is the Eucharist, also called Holy Communion, or Divine Liturgy: through the words of consecration, ordinary bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ. In the Eucharist, the word operates on existing objects to produce new meaning, which is, at its root, a similar operation performs on the existing images of this exhibition through the addition of the word. This exhibition exists as the result of research and a pedagogical practice which shares Bryant's personal ways of working and engaging with images with a small cohort of student-artists from Tbilisi, Georgia.

The items in this exhibition have been transformed through the addition of poetry, prose, and ekphrastic writing made by the following students from the Apollon Kutateladze Tbilisi State Academy of Arts: Ketevan Baramidze, Liz Rigal Kukava, Lika Laphachishvili, Lizi Gogiashvili, Kato Papashvili, Archil Gogelia, Marta Kokaia, Kato Bakhtadze and Sandro Kiknadze. These artworks are augmented by the writing of the students to make new works, critical propositions and humorous statements. This form of engagement, a contestation of traditional notions of authorship through engagement and re-engagement with the past and present, asks us to revisit some images and ideas we know, and opens up opportunities for playful engagement with images ideas we don't know.

About the Curator

Ernest A. Bryant III is an artist, educator, who moves between the labor of the studio, the classroom and the exhibition space. He holds an MFA from Yale University, an MFA from the New York School of Visual Arts and a BFA from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. Four years ago he designed the course *Engaging Art in Our World*, a first-year writing seminar, in which original works of art and artifacts serve as primary 'text' augmented by essays and literature about art. The objects in this exhibition, objects chosen not for their rarity but for their capacity to provoke and provide opportunities for close looking and rigorous thought, are drawn from that teaching collection.

A GIFT, Images, words and intimacy, pedagogy labor and practice, is Bryant's second exhibition project in Tbilisi, where he is conducting pedagogical research and undertaking studio work.

A GIFT, Images, words and intimacy, pedagogy labor and practice, Kote Afkhazi 18/2, Tbilisi, Georgia
August 7, 2026 /// info@criticismandvalue.com

About CRITICISM + VALUE (C+V)

(C+V) began as a discussion series exploring a single, generative question: what would a work of art say if it could speak verbally? Founded by Ernest A. Bryant III in 2020, C+V evolved from an intimate conversation series, into a, experimental performative lecture and interview series that uses AR image and AI voice mapping to stage dialogues between living artists and artworks from previous eras, making the impossible conversations possible across time and space.

That same spirit of critical inquiry and experimental play now animates a physical space. CRITICISM + VALUE, Experimental Pedagogy & Contemporary Art Space, located at Kote Afkhazi 18/2 in Tbilisi, Georgia, will host exhibitions, performances, and curatorial projects that treat the gallery as an extension of the art studio and classroom. The space operates at the intersection of contemporary art, architecture, pedagogy, and critical thought. Situated in the meeting room for TIMM ARCHITECTURE, it provides opportunities for exhibition as well as discussions about the inherent relationship between art and architecture— bringing together objects, ideas, and audiences in configurations that conventional exhibition venues rarely permit.

About TIMM Architecture

TIMM Architecture is a design and research oriented international network of partners offering design solutions ranging from small-scale architectural projects to large-scale urban interventions.

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Attributed to Emile Horace Vernet, Judith, (published 1850)
Etching, on paper 38 × 29 cm
Image courtesy Criticism + Value

Lizi Gogiashvili
-Tbilisi State Academy of Arts, second year-
broke all the mirrors
burned all the dress
knees hurt from kneeling and praying
my mind was created for devotion
my looks, my cage
who would know
is there answer in skies

i walk streets of enemy looking dignified and proud
i feel shakiness in my legs god make this over soon, fast
for god and for country
for god and for country
this is all i got

i will return
and i will return with victory
with blood on my hands
spith on my thighs
celebrate me all
as i got you your freedom
celebrate your lives
as i no longer have mine



Uberfahren, (Run Over), 1910
Soft ground etching on heavy cream wove paper.
24.7 x 31.75 cm
Image courtesy of Criticism + Value

Ketevan Baramidze

-Tbilisi State Academy of Arts, third year

I remember the day when I stopped being just a Kollwitz work. I was folded four times, and I didn't know that was how you treated works. But I was apparently meant to be hidden and shown to someone. And I completely accepted it. I was made a mystery, and I felt like I had become more than just art; I had become an artifact of history.

There were 99 almost identical works, and I was the only one that stood out. Those four scars became my unique feature.

The day I was folded four times and hidden was the best day of my life, and I became something special.

—

Liz Rigal

-Tbilisi State Academy of Arts, third year-

On the first fold parents carry the girl on her last journey,
On the middle fold, people in the middle pay respects for the dead girl,
And the crowd follows on another fold.
Those folds mar the paper just as much as they amplify its perception.