

A surreal landscape featuring a dense forest of dark, gnarled trees. The ground is covered in green grass and fallen leaves. Scattered throughout the scene are various mechanical components, including large, colorful gears in shades of orange, red, and yellow. Some gears are partially buried in the ground, while others are suspended in the air. Tangled masses of yellow and orange wires or roots are also visible, some resembling tangled hair or roots. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and industrial, with a strong contrast between the natural elements and the mechanical parts.

UPROOTED

Up/Rooted is the product of **Southern Equality Studios**--a project of the Campaign for Southern Equality that explores how the arts can be a catalyst and force in achieving lived and legal LGBTQ equality across the South. Up/Rooted consists of Liz Williams' surreal portraits of LGBTQ+ artists in their varied spaces of refuge along with Al Murray's nostalgic kinetic sculptures based on the artists' Southern, Queer and artistic roots.

Since the launch of the **Campaign for Southern Equality** (CSE) in 2011, CSE has worked at the intersections of personal narrative and political organizing, working with LGBTQ people and families to share the stories of their lives, whether through the written word, film, or photography. CSE has seen the power that storytelling has had on changing hearts and minds here in the South and nationwide, and it's a vital tool as we continue our work to build a South where all are free and affirmed to live as their authentic selves.

"Art and storytelling play a powerful role in movements and we're honored to be part of the

long legacy of folks doing this work...This studio has been a place for artists to work outside of their usual spaces, be inspired and be part of a community of folks exploring art as a site of resistance, resilience and community building."

--Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Executive Director of the Campaign for Southern Equality

"My work reflects on raising people up. I want fellow artists in the LGBTQIA community, who have felt like outsiders, that despite the current state of politics against our lives, our bodies, and our love, we are still magical and special. We can grow and rise up from our roots and through the art of creation, we can make something bigger than ourselves. By utilizing the magic of levitation, I hope to produce a physical document, that works to remind ourselves of our potential."

--Liz Williams, Artist, Up/Rooted Co-creator

"I always thought my small-town Southern roots were something I had to 'rise above.' My childhood dreams hinged on 'getting out' of my hometown. I thought surely I'd die if I didn't. I

thought I had to distance myself from grit and grease, had to hide my accent, had to have more and work less than my parents did--in order to be happy.

Now, with tools from the shop I grew up in, to the tune of cicadas, diesel engines and memories played in my mother's voice, I have closed that distance. This work is a way of bridging a divide I as a queer person thought I had to create for safety and liberation. It is the bridge, not the distance--as it turns out--that is freeing.

These sculptures represent how I as a queer Southerner re-assemble my memories and roots to build what is presently an identity I've always aspired to."

--Al Murray, Artist, Up/Rooted Co-creator

Special thanks to all those who've shouted out Up/Rooted so far, including:

Revolve, Asheville FM, Blue Ridge Public Radio, Asheville View, and Queer Appalachia.



We can grow and rise up
from our roots and through the
art of creation we can make
something
bigger than ourselves.
To those who would
prefer to erase our
existence,
Up/Rooted says:
You cannot, and
you will not.





Jékksyn O. Ícaro



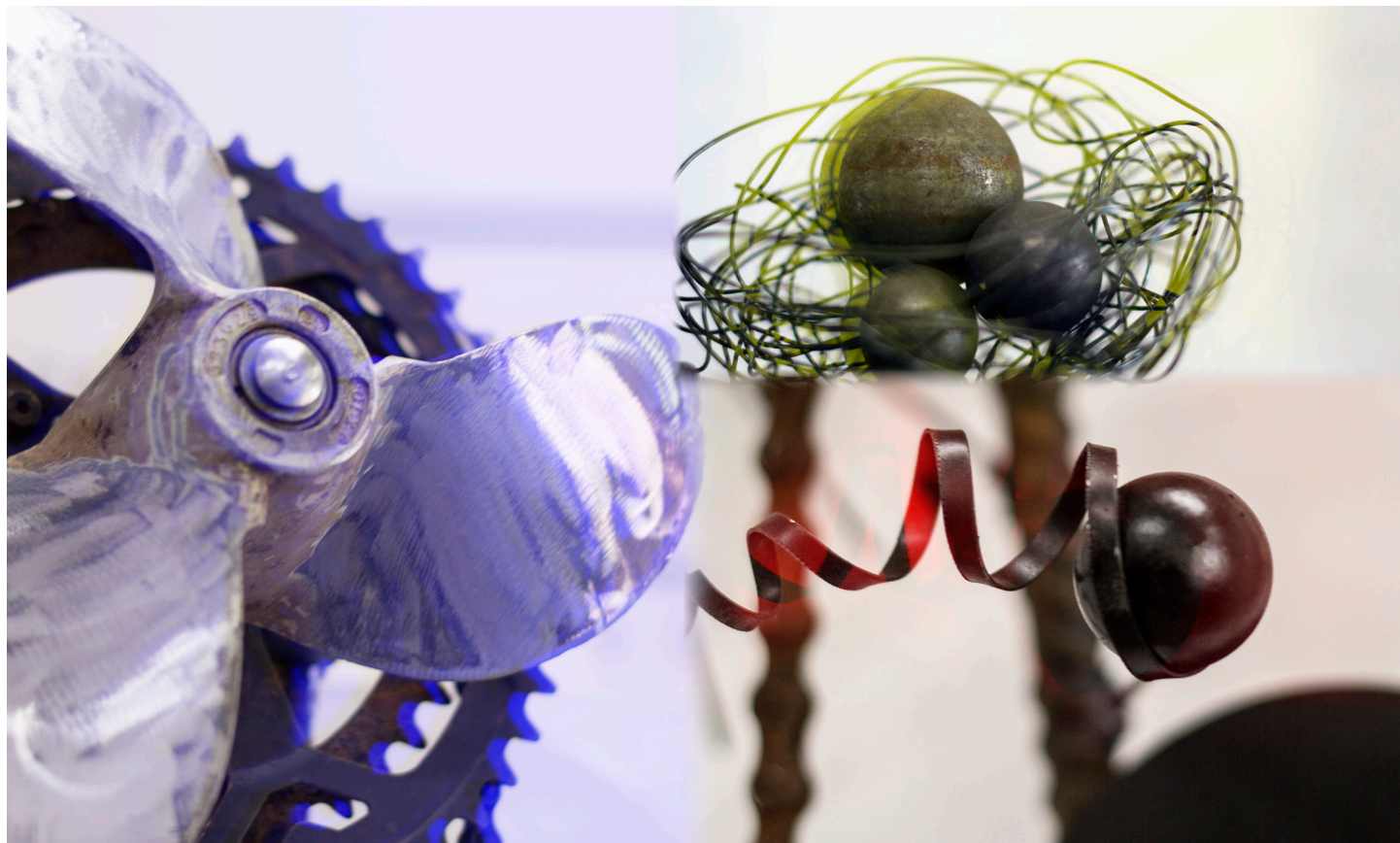
Ronika McClain

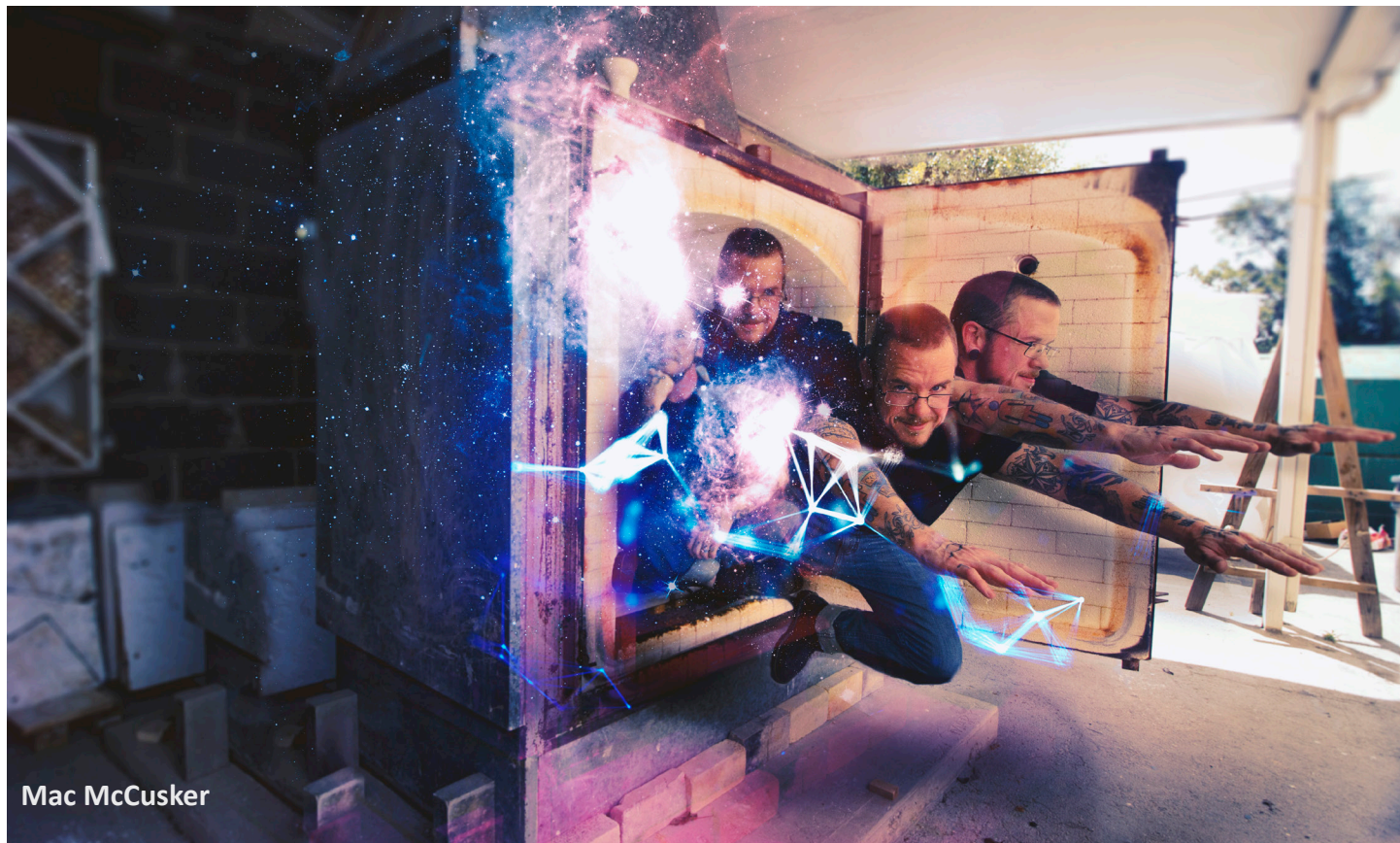


John Schweitzer



Maxx Feist





Mac McCusker



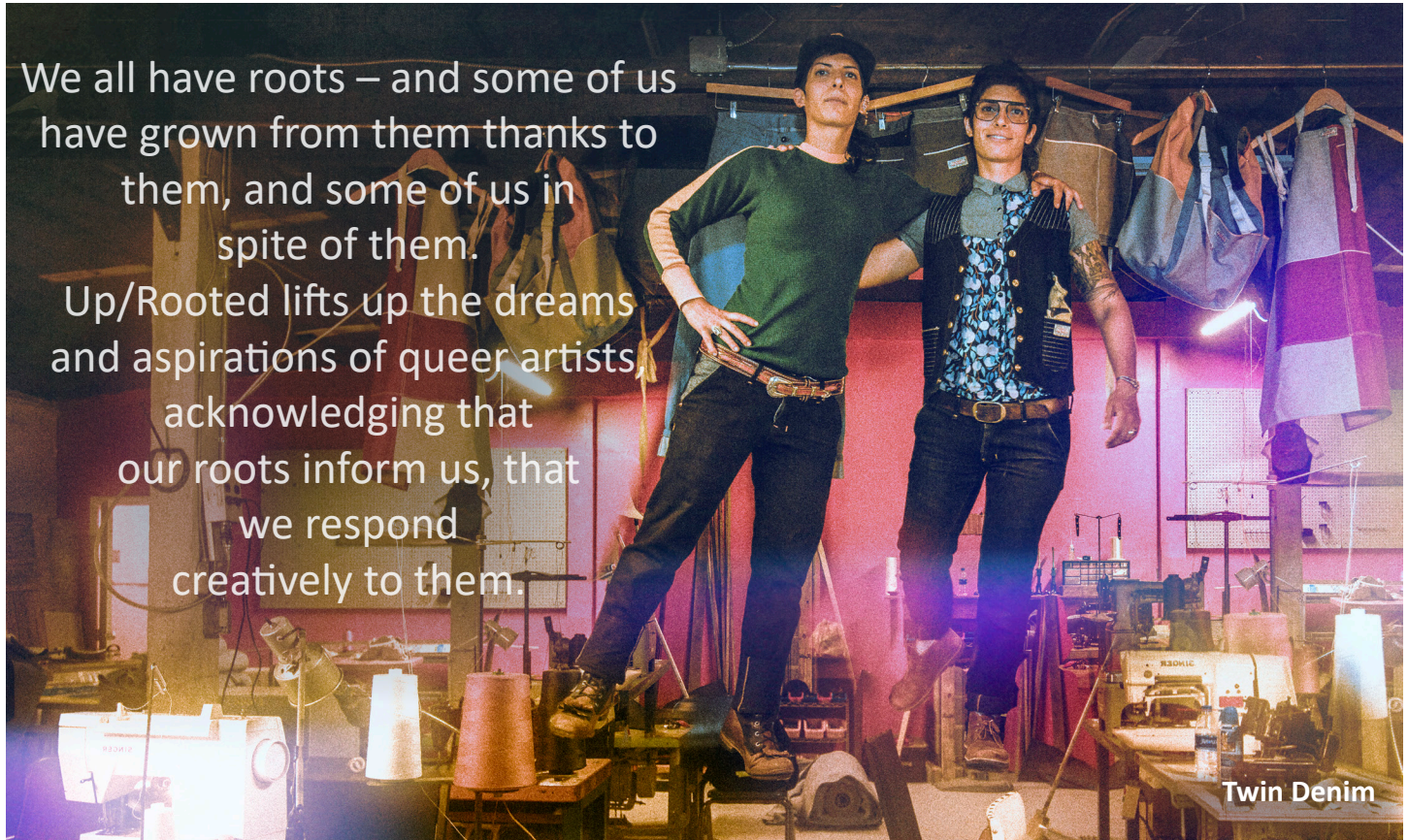
Mars Luren



Cortina Jenelle Caldwell

We all have roots – and some of us
have grown from them thanks to
them, and some of us in
spite of them.

Up/Rooted lifts up the dreams
and aspirations of queer artists,
acknowledging that
our roots inform us, that
we respond
creatively to them.



Twin Denim



Kay Petrucci and Ryn Arrants



Amanda Trader



Thank you to all of the amazing artists, who lent their time, talent, and heart to
Up/ Rooted: Chelsea Dobert-Kehn, Hannah Felperin, Jékksyn O. Ícaro, Mars Luren,
Cortina Jenelle Caldwell, Andi Lou, Rena Vox, John Schweitzer, Joey Brandt, Twin Denim
(Lea, Christina Panteliodis), Ronika McClain, Mac McCusker, Maxx Feist, Lando Morgan,
Amanda Trader, Kay Petrucci and Ryn Arrants.