



## MEDIA CONTACT

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California College of the Arts presents:

### ***Shooter Box***

September 1–October 8, 2021

Curated by CCA Graphic Design Chair Rachel Berger

*Shooter Box* is an exhibition protesting the United States military's use of Microsoft Xbox controllers as battle equipment, which transforms a child's toy into a weapon of war

On view at the CCA Hubbell Street Galleries, 151 Hubbell St  
Free and open to the public



Rachel Berger, *Bullet I*, 2021. Cast lead and copper, 6 x 4 x 2.5 inches. Courtesy of the artist.

**San Francisco, CA—Thursday, August 19, 2021—**California College of the Arts (CCA) presents *Shooter Box*, an exhibition of designed objects protesting the United States military's use of Microsoft Xbox controllers as battle equipment. The exhibition also features a selection of videos, objects, and other cultural artifacts that inspired these works.

The United States military has been integrating Microsoft Xbox video game controllers into battle equipment for more than a decade. Officials tout the ergonomic, cost savings, and training advantages of the cheap off-the-shelf controllers—soldiers who grew up playing Xbox can teach themselves its

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military applications within minutes. Unfortunately, the controller is inscribed with far more significant meanings and values than the military acknowledges. It is a child's toy transformed into a weapon of war.

Influenced by Bruce and Stephanie Tharp's scholarship on [discursive design](#)—design with conceptual, rather than commercial, intentions—objects in the exhibition challenge visitors to consider the consequences of commingling war and games. The centerpiece of the show is Rachel Berger's *Bullet I*, an Xbox controller cast in lead and copper. "The military is cynically repurposing a popular toy on behalf of the American war machine," says Berger. "I wanted to create an object that would embody the weight of war." Berger initially chose to work with lead because it is one of the heaviest common metals. Berger's controller weighs six pounds, 10 times the weight of the original controller. Lead is also highly toxic. Its use in many commercial applications has been banned, but it remains a popular means of producing homemade bullets.

### **Featured Artists:**

**Rachel Berger** is chair and associate professor of Graphic Design at California College of the Arts. In her creative practice, she investigates the relationship between design and culture through self-initiated creative projects, writing, and work with nonprofit organizations. In 2021, she received a Berkeley Civic Arts Commission grant. She is a 2020 LABA fellow. Her writing has been published by Bloomsbury, MIT Press, *AIGA Eye on Design*, and *Design Observer*. She holds an MFA in Graphic Design and a BA in American Studies, both from Yale University.

**Joseph DeLappe** is the professor of Games and Tactical Media at Abertay University in Dundee, Scotland where he relocated early in 2017 after 23 years directing the Digital Media program at the University of Nevada, Reno. A native San Franciscan, he has been working with electronic and new media since 1983. His work in online gaming performance, sculpture, and electromechanical installation have been shown throughout the United States and abroad—including exhibitions and performances in Australia, the United Kingdom, China, Germany, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Mexico, Italy, Peru, Sweden, and Canada. He has lectured throughout the world regarding his work, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. His works have been featured in the *New York Times*, the *Australian Morning Herald*, *Artweek*, *Art in America*, and in the 2010 book from Routledge entitled *Joystick Soldiers: The Politics of Play in Military Video Games* among many others. He has authored two book chapters, including "The Gandhi Complex: The Mahatma in Second Life" in the book *Net Works: Case Studies in Web Art and Design* (New York, Routledge 2011) and "Playing Politics: Machinima as Live Performance and Document" in the book *Understanding Machinima Essays on Filmmaking*

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*in Virtual Worlds* (London, UK, Continuum 2012). In 2017 DeLappe was awarded a prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship.

**Sung Jang** is a graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with a fine arts degree and Domus Academy in Milano with a Masters in Design. Sung began his design career in Milano at Samsung Design Milano before taking on a teaching career as a faculty at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Designed Objects program. Since 2013, Sung has served at the University of Illinois at Chicago's School of Design as an assistant professor and director of undergraduate studies to the Industrial Design program. Sung has worked with international brands such as Louis Vuitton, Guzzini, and Roche Bobois and been represented internationally at Venice Biennale, Design Miami, Victoria and Albert Museum, Volume Gallery, Armory Show, and Chamber NYC, among others.

**Brian McMullen** lives with his sons Alton and Molloy in rural Indiana.

**John Colle Rogers** is a sculptor and blacksmith based in Oakland, CA. He has used military materials and firearms to create objects which indulge in and critique the uses and abuses of power. The many veins of his investigations include watercolors of his character the Raccoonicorn, installations detailing the takeover of various arts organizations by his phantom company JohnKo Systems Unltd, and his multi-decade involvement with the performance group Survival Research Laboratories. Rogers graduated from California College of Arts and Crafts in 1997 with an MFA in Sculpture.

**Caution:**

*This exhibition features an object made out of lead, a chemical known to the State of California to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. Exposure to lead and lead compounds may increase cancer risk. Avoid handling or wash hands after handling.*

**About California College of the Arts**

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) educates students to shape culture and society through the practice and critical study of art, architecture, design, and writing. Benefitting from its San Francisco Bay Area location, the college prepares students for lifelong creative work by cultivating innovation, community engagement, and social and environmental responsibility.

CCA offers a rich curriculum of 23 undergraduate and 11 graduate programs in art, design, architecture, and writing taught by a faculty of expert practitioners. Attracting promising students from across the nation and around the world, CCA is [one of the 10 most diverse colleges in the U.S.](#) Last year, *U.S. News &*

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*World Report* ranked CCA as one of the [top 10 graduate schools for fine arts in the country](#).

Graduates are highly sought-after by companies such as Pixar/Disney, Apple, Intel, Facebook, Gensler, Google, IDEO, Autodesk, Mattel, and Nike, and many have launched their own successful businesses. Alumni and faculty are often recognized with the highest honors in their fields, including Academy Awards, AIGA Medals, Fulbright Scholarships, Guggenheim Fellowships, MacArthur Fellowships, National Medal of Arts, and the Rome Prize, among others.

CCA is creating a new, expanded college campus at its current site in San Francisco, spearheaded by the architectural firm Studio Gang. The new campus design will be a model of [sustainable construction and practice](#); will unite the college's programs in art, crafts, design, architecture, and writing in one location to create new adjacencies and interactions; and will provide [more student housing](#) than ever before. For more information, visit [cca.edu](#).

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

CCA Hubbell Street Galleries presents ***Shooter Box***

**Exhibition dates:** September 1–October 8, 2021

**Location:** CCA Hubbell Street Galleries, 151 Hubbell Street, San Francisco

**Gallery Hours:** [Thursday–Friday, 11 am–4 pm; Wednesday by appointment](#)

**Admission:** Free

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