



passing
bittersweet

JANUARY 9-FEBRUARY 9, 2020

Williams Center Gallery

Elizabeth Johnson | guest curator

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Passing Bittersweet features work that embodies ideas garnered from reading Lafayette alumnus Ross Gay's *The Book of Delights*. His chatty, humorous, open-ended essays were culled from a year of daily asking himself: "What delights me?" Self-study and identity merge with the places, people, books, and routines that make Ross Gay happy. From inside what he calls "intense fleeting attentions," Gay maintains a practice of acknowledging what is beautiful in the midst of the brutal.

The artists of *Passing Bittersweet* were chosen not because they illustrate Gay's delights or process, but because their personal delights find aesthetic, physical ways to reframe negativity. The gathered artworks echo Gay's conviction that numberless, small, positive human actions and transactions dispel what is dark, lonely, and unjust. *Passing Bittersweet* honors Ross Gay, *The Book of Delights*, and artists who validate vulnerable, peripheral, and oft-overlooked treasures of common experience.

Published in conjunction with the exhibition:

**Passing Bittersweet:
A Tribute to Ross Gay's *The Book of Delights***

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Williams Center Gallery**

Lafayette College
Williams Center for the Arts
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