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## On the Cover: Artist's Statement for Bury the Past, Rob Us Blind

Ryan Mehigan

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# Artist's Statement for *Bury the Past,* *Rob Us Blind*

RYAN MEHIGAN

The title of my thesis for a Master of Arts in Teaching Creative Arts is *This Light Is Not My Own*. The body of artistic work I created is an investigation into detournement, authorial intent, and activated spectatorship, addressing the questions: “What can I use to make art?” “What do I intend the art to say?” and “What does the art do to the viewer?” The body of work is composed through detournement, recontextualizing visual fragments that cross my path from magazines, newspapers, and mail order catalogs to television, video, and the vastness of the Internet. The disparity of content ranges from historic government archives, family photos, pop culture icons, 1980s movies, video games, social movement protesters, Internet memes, and beyond. Such diverse sourcing creates provocative yet obscure compositions caught in the limbo between conflict and resolve.

The intent of my thesis is to reduce my authorial voice, shifting to a role of choreographer of the viewer's experience. This has recast my art from a declarative position of “I am saying to you” to an interrogative art that is asking, “What are you hearing?” With such a question asked, I had left

space for the viewer to actively take part in the installation of this art at the Wallace L. Anderson Gallery, Bridgewater State University in May 2018 by way of whiteboards, blank speech bubbles, and thought clouds to provide an answer and resolve the work.

## Editor's Note

Photographs of the installation of Mr. Mehigan's art is found on the next page of this volume. Additionally, photographs of Mr. Mehigan's art are found throughout this edition of *The Graduate Review*.

## About the Artist

**Ryan Mehigan** is a visual artist and educator who lives in Wareham, Massachusetts. A native of New England, Ryan grew up in Maynard, Massachusetts and completed an undergraduate study of political science and studio art at the University of Vermont. His artwork combines a diversity of influences, from graffiti and street art to collage and abstract expressionism, often addressing subject matters of pop culture and politics. He has exhibited his work at various galleries throughout the region, including the Danforth Museum of Art in Framingham, Massachusetts and The Armory Building in New York City. Past clients include New Balance, Lululemon Athletica, and Camp Bisco Music Festival. Ryan completed a Master of Arts in Teaching Creative Arts at Bridgewater State University in 2018 and currently teaches visual art at Qualters Middle School in Mansfield, Massachusetts.