



155 Gibbs Street, Rockville, MD 20850, 301-315-8200, www.visartscenter.org

Gallery Hours: Wednesday, Thursday 12 - 4 PM, Friday 12 - 8 PM, Saturday & Sunday 12 - 4 PM

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Deep Flash: On Art and Transformation

September 5 - October 14, 2018

Gibbs Street Gallery | Kaplan Gallery | Common Ground Gallery | Concourse Gallery

Opening Reception: Friday, September 7, 7 - 9 PM

Curators: Cynthia Connolly, Judy A. Greenberg, Fletcher Mackey, Jacqueline Maria Milad, Jack Rasmussen, Laura Roulet, José Ruiz, Nancy Sausser, Lynn Silverman, | 'sindikit | (Zoë Charlton and Tim Doud)

Artists: Ashley Culver, Frank Hallam Day, Elsabé Dixon, Alex Ebstein, Shané K. Gooding, Stephen Hayes, Christopher K. Ho, James Huckenpahler, Jean Jinho Kim, Guy Miller, Evan Reed, Allan Rosenbaum, Rachel Rotenberg, Foon Sham, Joe Shannon, Chad Stayrook, Hillary Steel, Judit Varga,

Elizabeth Zvonar, bees, The Punk Rock Flyer and Zines (from the archives of Cynthia Connolly, Dischord Records at the University of Maryland at College Park).

Rockville, MD - In celebration of its 30th anniversary, VisArts presents an exhibition in four galleries that explores the power of visual art to transform. Eleven curators selected a single work of art, a small curated group of artworks by multiple artists, or an art experience that addresses art's ability to shift social, cultural, or personal forms. This exhibition was created in the spirit of sharing experiences and opening conversations about the "work" of art as a spark or trigger for conversions spectacular and subtle in both makers and viewers.

Deep Flash speculates that art and transformation are partners: one influencing the other in no set order. Materials move through a variety of states in relationship with questions, ideas, histories, and individual and collective experiences. In a "deep flash" moment this arrangement may send perception and thinking into fresh new spaces.

"*Deep Flash* happened to me," says organizer Susan Main. "I was blindsided by two art viewing experiences that marked me and influenced my practice as an artist, viewer, and curator. I was excited to see what experiences affected this group of thoughtful curators who live and work in the Washington/Baltimore metro areas." The result is an exhibition that features a spectrum of artists from emerging to well-established working in a wide variety of media.

Independent curator Laura Roulet considered planetary transformation through climate change and the role of the eco-artist for *Deep Flash*. She invited Elsabé Dixon, whose project *Mise en Place/ Everything in its Place*, incorporates wheat, raising live bees, harvesting honey, kneading and baking bread - all transformative processes that demonstrate the life cycle of plants, insects, and the humans that depend on them. Using sculpture, performance, workshops, a panel talk with local beekeepers, the Beall-Dawson House Museum collection, and Great Harvest Bread she makes the interconnections in an ecological system transparent and encourages active participation.



(left) Elsabé Dixon, *Mise en Place (Bread Wall)*, 2018, bread, honey, beeswax, 8 x 8 x 2 feet

(right) Elsabé Dixon *Hive and Bread Assemblage (in progress)*, 2018, mixed medium steel, beeswax and hive detritus + bread, 7 x 8 x 2 feet

José Ruiz explores collaboration as a transformative process with the potential to foster stimulating relationships, fresh insights into individual and collective work, and expanded discourse. Ruiz selected artists James Huckenpahler, Christopher K. Ho, and Chad Staybrook. Each contributes a single video addressing the theme of art and transformation that together become a single work with three-channels.



Chad Staybrook, *In the Sea*, 2016, 1080p HD video w/sound, 11 min 25 sec



Christopher K. Ho, 错位青春, 2018, video, 2:46



James Huckenpahler, *Fifteen Minutes of Fame in the Nineteenth Century*, 2017 2018, Software, Variable dimensions, Courtesy of Hemphill Fine Arts

Nancy Sausser addresses her interest in the “imbued object” bringing together six artists who work with wood, clay and fiber: Evan Reed, Hillary Steel, Allan Rosenbaum, Rachel Rotenberg, Foon Sham, and Judit Varga. “They all link to transformation through the process of imbuing, which subtly turns one thing into another, into more than it was originally or more than it seems on the surface,” she writes in her curatorial essay for the *Deep Flash* catalog. “Each of these artists has made artworks that present as objects that are deeply imbued with meaning and feeling. They emanate something poetic, mystical and human, something elemental that stems from references to collective or individual history or past use.”



(left) Allan Rosenbaum, *Cocoon*, resin clay, fabric and EPS, 28 x 8 x 8 inches

(right) Foon Sham, *Wall Piece with Chinese Map*, wood and map collages, 54 x 7 x 6 inches



(left) Evan Reed, *Honey Pot*, 2015, Wood: reclaimed architectural molding and found branches, 37 H x 15 W x 42 D inches

(right) Judit Varga, *Bud*, 2017, ceramic, 18 H x 19 W x 11 D inches



(left) Rachel Rotenberg, *Untitled #39*, 1989, cedar and metal, 20 H x 41 W x 24 D inches. Photo Anderson Toledo.

(right) Hillary Steel, *Phoenix*, 2016, Ikat dyeing/handweaving, silk, cotton, rayon, 62.5 x 30 inches.

Photo Mark Gulezian.

Fascinated by the relationship between transformation and time, Fletcher Mackey selected works by emerging artists Stephen Hayes and Shané K. Gooding. Hayes' sculptures, partially evolved female figures rising from bases of scavenged wood, present a collective of power, individuality, dignity, and ethereality. Gooding presents veiled photographic portraits, journal entries, and a diptych video *Raise a Woman Up*. Both artists evoke connections to ancient, classical, and totemic powers as passageways for the transmission of ancestral history.



(left) Shané K. Gooding, *Destiny In Shades Of Brown*, 2016, archival digital inkjet print, lace, 36 x 24 inches

(right) Stephen Hayes, *Untitled #1 - 4*, 2018, wood, plaster cast, copper, nails, fabric, paint, Dimensions variable

Curator/photographer Lynn Silverman presents the book, *Evidence*, regarded as a seminal collection of photographs edited by Larry Sultan and Mike Mandel, and a video of its pages. Silverman discovered the

book in a bookstore in the 1970's. It ignited a new understanding of the photographic image as document and its relationship to narrative leading her to a practice committed to conceptual photography.



Mike Mandel and Larry Sultan, *Evidence* (1st edition), Published by Clatworthy Colorvues, Greenbrae, California, 1977, Hardcover book, 9.5 x 10 x .5 inches

Artist and curator Cynthia Connolly presents original Punk Rock zines and flyers from the Dischord Archive now housed at the University of Maryland at College Park (UMCP). "Photocopies, flyers and zines were the cheap, fun way to experiment, and communicate progressive political thought," says Connolly. They became her gateway to art and music communities. Her installation includes a zine-making station with instructions from John Davis, the archivist of the Dischord Archive at the Special Collections in Performing Arts located in the Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library at UMCP.



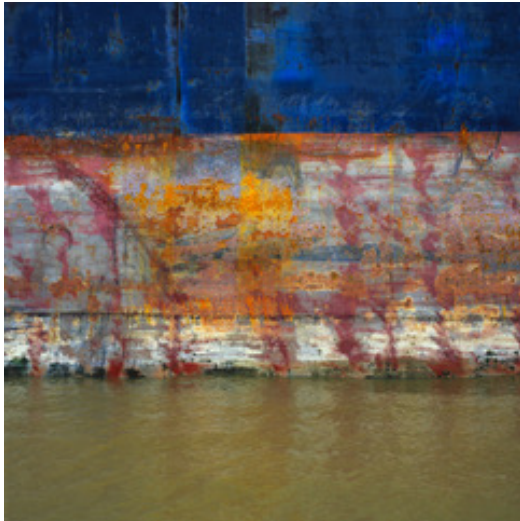
D.C. Flyer, 1981, from the archive of Dischord Records

Joe Shannon was one of two painters that curator Jack Rasmussen was intent on getting to know when he came to Washington, D. C. in 1973. Three politically current paintings by Shannon on view in the exhibition make a strong, vivid case for Rasmussen's declaration that we need artists like Shannon who are not swayed by trends, stay on their own nerve, make political art because it is necessary, and remain powerfully idiosyncratic. As he states in his curatorial essay, "We must continuously act to transform the world into what it can be—better, not worse, for those living in it."



Joe Shannon, *White Only – Kill America!*, 2017, acrylic on masonite, 24 x 24 inches

For curator Judy A. Greenberg, Frank Hallam Day's photographs of the hulls of wrecked ships provoked a spiritual and contemplative reaction. Repetition and framing create perceptual shifts for the viewer between reality and abstraction, color field painting and documentary photography, life and death. "Day transforms the wreck headed for extinction into another space unto itself," states Greenberg.



Frank Hallam Day, *Hull #26*, 2003 – 2005, photograph, pigment prints, 40 x 40 x 2 inches each, Courtesy of Addison/Ripley Fine Art

Jacqueline Maria Milad considers the transformative affect that an artist can have on community. With her selection of Alex Ebstein, Milad presents an artist who is transforming Baltimore through her work as an artist, writer, curator, and gallery owner. Alex Ebstein's installation includes subversive and seductive references to the transformative potential of art, the gym, the wellness spa, and the porous boundaries between pleasure, beauty, desire, leisure, and consumption.



Alex Ebstein, *Cobbling Together Tranquility*, 2018, drywall, paper, wood, string, yarn, PVC Yoga Mats, acrylic, dimensions variable

'sindikit (Tim Doud and Zoë Charlton) sends up transformational flares of all sorts presenting the work of artists Jean Jinho Kim, Elizabeth Zvonar, Guy Miller, and Ashley Culver. "Each artist has a relationship to using materials in unorthodox ways," write the collaborative curatorial duo. "These materials are sourced from their everyday life – whether it be from work, home, or leisure – to invite curiosity and play, provoke critique of historical or social customs, or address hybridity and materiality." Transformation through art-making and community-based conversations about the issues most important to artists are at the heart of 'sindikit's mission. "It's the audacity, and the hope, that we place in Art—that culture, creativity, and art can inspire, shift, radicalize, undermine, and expand our experience—can transform us from who and where we are to who and where we want to be."



(left) Jean Jinho Kim, *Revived 2*, aluminum downspout, PVC downspout, vinyl tubing, plastic bracket, 69 x 71 x 63 inches
(right) Elizabeth Zvonar, *Ode to Sherman*, 2013, digital inkjet print of a handcut collage, 20 x 22 inches. Courtesy of Elizabeth Zvonar and Daniel Faria Gallery.



(left) **Guy Miller**, *Giant Tarnation Can*, 2017, found material, custom labeling, 32 H x 70 circumference inches
(right) **Ashley Culver**, *one in search of one*, 2017, peels, paper, and thread, 12 x 12 inches (detail)
Variable Edition of 4

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

- **Opening Reception:** Friday, September 7, 7 - 9 PM
- **Docent Tours of the exhibition:** Weekly public tours on **Saturdays and Sundays at 1 PM** in all galleries.

Schedule a private tour for your group during our gallery hours. To schedule your tour please complete and submit the tour request form: <https://www.visartscenter.org/more/tours/>

- **DIY: Punk Rock Flyers and Zines:** Concourse Gallery (2nd floor), during regular gallery hours.

DIY-flyer and zine-making table with instructions in a take-away zine by John Davis, publisher of *Slanted* zine, musician and the Performing Arts Meta Archivist at Special Collections in Performing Arts (SCPA), University of Maryland at College Park.

- **Performance and workshop: *The Girl Who Stepped on Bread*:** Gibbs Street Gallery (1st floor), Friday, October 5, 2 PM – 6 PM, Saturday, October 6, 10 AM – 12 PM.

Elsabé Dixon focuses on honey, pollinators and bread. Baking and beekeeping are not only ancient spiritual/sacred crafts, but they are also the last frontier in a world that faces increasing food deserts because of pesticide and GMO contamination. Participants will witness a 10-minute performance and participate in three actions involving bread, agriculture and art. To register for a one-hour action with the artist in this guided workshop, register here: www.bit.ly/2Nwa8bm

- **Pollination Panel Discussion-** Sunday, October 7, 1:00 – 3:00 PM, Beall-Dawson House, 42 West Middle Lane, Rockville, Maryland (walking distance from VisArts). Discussion on beekeeping, pollination, and the intersection of living systems with art. Special guests to be announced. Parking available on the street and in a small nearby parking lot.
- **Deep Flash: On Art and Transformation:** Digital catalog available for download or print copies. Essays on art and transformation by all guest curators. More info: link TBD.
- **Inside Art Transformational Art Experiences:** Were you transformed by art? How? When? Where? Tell us your story. Instructions for submitting your story here: <https://www.visartscenter.org/transformational-art-experiences/>
- **Deep Flash Panel Discussion with Curators and Artists:** All galleries, Sunday, September 16, 2:00 PM. Curators and artists discuss the resonance of an art experience.
- **Exhibitions and events are always free and open to the public. Suggested Donation is \$5.00**

About VisArts: Located in the heart of Rockville, Maryland, VisArts is a hub for the visual arts that engages nearly 30,000 visitors annually through gallery exhibitions, education programs, a studio artist program, and events. Founded in 1987, VisArts is committed to our mission of transforming individuals and communities through the visual arts. VisArts is located three blocks from the Rockville Metro station at 155 Gibbs Street, Rockville, Maryland. For information, please visit www.visartscenter.org or call 301-315-8200.

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For information, images or to arrange an interview or preview of the exhibition, please contact Susan Main at (301) 315-8200 ext. 110 or smain@visartscenter.org

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