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Local Galleries are Making a Splash at (e)merge – Part 1 of 2

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Danielle Scruggs / *Self Portrait* / Image courtesy of Pleasant Plains Workshop

From Amsterdam to Arlington, galleries and artists from four different continents are preparing to gather at this year's (e)merge art fair to showcase (and sell) some of the best contemporary art from around the world. While the international reach of (e)merge is remarkable given that this is only its third season, the level of participation from DC-area artists and galleries is truly impressive. To whet your artistic appetite, we've compiled a small taste of what our local galleries will be presenting at this year's fair. We'll focus on District galleries in this edition; watch for the Maryland and Virginia edition around October 1, 2013!

Charles Krause/Reporting Fine Art

While many artists featured at (e)merge are on the cusp of their careers, Charles Krause/Reporting Fine Art takes the opposite tack, inviting viewers to reconsider the 60 year career of an artist no longer with us. With a strong curatorial direction towards work that comments on politics and confronts social norms, Reporting Fine Art will examine the decades-long career of Boris Lurie, his Polish contemporary Jerzy Janiszewski and newcomer K M Ramich. Lurie came of age in the Nazi deathcamps of World War II which greatly impacted his views on how art should confront politics. His works echo the abstract expressionist techniques of his contemporaries, but their provocative political critiques relegated him to the sidelines of mid-century art history. This is Lurie's first exhibition in the DC area.

Contrasting this mood is the work of Janiszewski, a Polish graphic designer best known for designing the logo of the Solidarity trade movement. Krause notes that this logo is, "one of the 20th century's most important graphic designs," and original examples can be found in major museums throughout the world (a rare, early print from the artist's archive could be yours!). The contemporary sculptures of K M Ramich, commenting on the gun control debate, prove that art continues to be politically relevant in the 21st century.



Jerzy Janiszewski / *Solidarity Poster* / 1980 / 39.4 x 27.6 in.

Image courtesy of Charles Krause/Reporting Fine Art

CONNERSMITH

In addition to organizing the whole weekend, CONNERSMITH will be showcasing the work of Ali Miller, a 2012 MFA graduate from MICA. Miller's work - lush, painted abstracts with a wry nod to electronic media - were featured by CONNERSMITH during its Academy 2012 show last July.



Ali Miller / *Self-Sufficient* / 2013 / Oil, acrylic, and quartz on panel / 11 x 14 inches
Copyright Ali Miller, courtesy CONNERSMITH.

DCCAH

The D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities is hosting a large (16 artist) group exhibition featuring recipients of the 2013 Artist Fellowship Program (AFP). The AFP awards a \$5,000 grant to individual artists in a variety of artistic fields who according to program guidelines, "substantively impact the lives of District of Columbia residents through their artistic excellence." The visual artists featured this year (from all across the city) are Alexandra Silverthorne, Anna U. Edholm Davis, Cory Oberndorfer, Dana Jeri Maier, Dean Kessmann, Elizabeth Graeber, Evangeline Montgomery, Jack Gordon, John James Anderson, Linn Meyers, Melani Douglass, Roderick Turner, Terry DeBardelaben, Tim Doud, Michael Iacovone and William Newman.

Flashpoint Gallery

Flashpoint appears to be showcasing a fairly monochrome palette this year with the works of Sonya Lawyer, Dana Maier (who is also appearing in the DCCAH space) and duo Lauren Rice and Brian Barr. While spare with the color, the exhibition is rich with ideas. All four artists use appropriation (of ideas, old photographs, and in the case of Maier even overheard bar conversations) to “bring into focus an evolving social, historical and cultural landscape,” according to the press release. The resulting conversation inspires a feeling of cultural renewal, as the artists use fragments of history to imagine a more harmonious future.



Lauren Rice & Brian Barr / *The Hunter* (detail) / 2012 / Cut Photo Collage / 5 x 3in.

Image Courtesy of Flashpoint Gallery

Hamiltonian Gallery

Hamiltonian is featuring Baltimore-based artist Amy Boone-McCreesh, a mixed-media artist interested in, “exploring the cultural lines between functional items and decoration, and revisiting these themes in the context of contemporary art.” Boone-McCreesh, a 2010 Towson University MFA Graduate and 2012 Hamiltonian Fellow, has had several exhibitions at a variety of Baltimore-area galleries, but may be a fresh face here in DC. That is certainly going to change after this weekend.



Amy Boone-McCreesh / *Little Chief Rising* (detail) / 2012 / Fabric and Found Materials
67 x 45 x 5in / Image Courtesy of Hamiltonian Gallery

Pleasant Plains Workshop

Part arts incubator and part gallery, Pleasant Plains Workshop will feature 11 residents artists in (e)merge's artist platform, located in the public areas of the hotel. Expect to see a wide variety of photography, painting and printmaking from artists Kristina

Bilonick, Ken Ashton, Anthony Dihle, Angela Douglas, Jared Earley, Bethany Hansen, Chris Haughrey, Rujunko Pugh, Danielle Scruggs, Ann-Marie Van Tassell and Martine Workman. Workshop owner Kristina Bilonick tells me that PPW is participating at (e)merge as sort of a “hybrid space”, so in addition to showcasing art, they will also be running a variety of participatory activities such as printmaking demonstrations, food events and record listening parties.



Anthony Dihle / *Flavor Ice* / Image courtesy of Pleasant Plains Workshop

Transformer Gallery

Transformer is also actively involved in this year's (e)merge. Upstairs (in the gallery area) they will be presenting a site-specific piece by the St. Louis-based, artistic collaborative US English titled *Strike Work*. US English is the brainchild of Brea and James McAnally, and their ambitious work, a combination of performance, video and sculpture, "is a self-reflective meditation on the space of artistic production and exchange, positing the value of over-labor in the face of a fragile and changing terrain," according to Transformer's press release. If that isn't a heady-enough experience, the gallery is collaborating with the fair's staff to produce a panel discussion entitled "CONNECT: Artists + Community, an examination of how artists build communities of support. The discussion, on Friday, October 4th at 2:00pm, will feature James McAnally of US English and local artist Margaret Boozer from DC's Red Dirt Studios, among others.



US English / *Strike Work* / 2012-2013 (ongoing) / Approximately 24 x 18 x 8 in.

Image courtesy of the Transformer Gallery

Washington Project for the Arts

Washington Project for the Arts, an artist-centric organization working to support area artists at all stages of their careers, is mounting two exhibitions in adjoining rooms at the fair. In one room, they're highlighting the work of local artists Marley Dawson and Si Jae Byun working primarily in sculpture and painting, respectively. According to WPA Program Director Blair Murphy, the artists were chosen, "because they're two

really exciting emerging artists in the area who are making innovative and interesting work.” I am looking forward to seeing how the sculpture pieces on the floor interact with the two-dimensional works on the wall.

While their first room is an intimate, two-artist exhibition, their second space will be a riot of creativity with an “8 by 8” show featuring works on paper measuring up to 8 x 8 in from over 100 of their member artists. Blair describes it as a “flat file on the wall” and is sure to be a heady mix of themes and imagery!



Si Jae Byun / *Wind #3 in Jungle* / 2013 / 46 x 36 in.

Image Courtesy of Washington Project for the Arts.

(e)merge takes place October 3-6, 2013 at the Capitol Skyline Hotel. For more information and a complete schedule of events, visit their website [here](#).