



Arlington Arts Center Media Contact:

Laura Devereux

703 248 6800

laura.devereux@arlingtonartscenter.org

www.arlingtonartscenter.org

Arlington Arts Center presents: *Spring SOLOS 2018*

On View: April 14 – June 2, 2018

Opening Reception: Saturday, April 14, 6-9pm

ARLINGTON, VA – Arlington Arts Center (AAC) presents *Spring SOLOS 2018*, the second SOLOS presentation of its 2017-2018 season. The artists included in *Spring SOLOS 2018* are Sean Derry, Adam Griffiths, Phaen Howng, Giulia Piera Livi, Nick Primo, and Jerry Truong.

AAC's long-running SOLOS exhibition program introduces talented regional artists to the community and give these artists an opportunity to present new work in solo-style exhibitions in one of AAC's seven gallery spaces.

Featuring drawing, sculpture, multimedia animation, and installation, *Spring SOLOS 2018* highlights both the strength and the impressive range of the Mid-Atlantic's contemporary artists.



Giulia Piera Livi, *See Here*, 2017

From Jerry Truong's elegiac charcoal drawings to Phaen Hawng's vibrant post-apocalyptic paintings and sculptures, the artists engage with historical traumas and potential environmental catastrophes. Adam Griffiths combines influences from underground comics with a surrealist sensibility to create strange new worlds in his drawings and illustrations. Working in sculpture and installation, Sean Derry, Nick Primo, and Giulia Piera Livi all incorporate unconventional materials into their work, transforming mundane materials into elegant, ambitious, and surreal sculptures and environments.

The artists included in the exhibition were selected through an open call juried by Kate Haw, Director of the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art, and Mika Yoshitake, Curator at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING:

Opening Reception: Saturday, April 14, 6-9pm

Opening Reception for exhibitions on all three levels and open studios with our resident artists.

Gallery Talk: Saturday, June 2, 1pm-3pm

A walking tour and discussion of *Spring SOLOS 2018*, with the artists in the exhibition

EXHIBITING ARTISTS:

Adam Griffiths, Takoma Park, MD

Adam Griffiths creates cartoons, comics, illustrations, and animations inspired by genre comics, commercial children's cartoons, cinema history, and underground culture. Armed with an imagination influenced by surrealism and a humble ball point pen, Griffiths creates otherworldly images that invite the audience to explore and interpret the stories he presents on their own terms. For *Spring SOLOS 2018*, Griffiths will present an installation of drawings, incorporating imagery inspired by Edwin A. Abbott's 1884 novella "Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions."

Giulia Piera Livi, Baltimore, MD

Giulia Piera Livi's work focuses on both the domestic and the utilitarian. With materiality in mind, Livi explores light and shadow and the functionality of art and objects inside the home. She creates everyday household objects using unorthodox materials and odd proportions to investigate the modern, curated living space. In her practice, she merges the whimsical and dreamlike with the rigid and absolute, to distort our sense of space and reality.

Jerry Truong, Silver Spring, MD

Jerry Truong's artistic practice draws on the incomplete and informal archive of images and memories passed down from his parents, who fled war-torn Vietnam by boat. They spent time in a refugee camp in Thailand before settling in the United States where Truong, born in California, grew up largely oblivious to the trauma that they had endured. For *Spring SOLOS 2018*, the artist will present large-scale drawings created from charcoal and incense ash drawn from a Vietnamese ancestral altar. The drawings depict land, water, and sky, imagining the landscape that acted as both escape route and mortal threat to those fleeing their homeland.

Nick Primo, Baltimore, MD

Nick Primo uses a visual language drawn from construction, architecture, object design, furniture-making, and cabinetry to create minimal sculptural abstractions, prints, and drawings. Referencing familiar forms based on mass-produced and functional objects, Primo's sculptures and drawings explore the ways form is imbued with meaning. Primo also draws on the legacies of minimalism, complicating minimalist aesthetic forms with material experimentation, infusions of color, and the use of prefabricated materials.

Phaan Howng, Baltimore, MD

Phaan Howng creates artifacts and installations that imagine the sublime and formidable beauty of earth after humanity. Combining painting, sculpture, installations, and performance, she envisions an "optimist post-apocalypse," an opportunity for nature to restyle itself into different sublime landscapes, devoid of human life. Howng deploys intense, unnatural colors to create environments that hide and camouflage themselves in order to immerse, disorient, and shock those who dare to intrude. Her post-natural worlds initiate a dialogue about the current crises of world ecology and the effects of human habitation.

Sean Derry, Indiana, PA

Sean Derry builds kinetic installations from repurposed tools, motors, and household objects. Carpet remnants, household hardware, cowboy boots, and bed sheets, among other unexpected materials, have all been

transformed to create his purposefully low-tech machines. *Air Pump*, his contribution to Spring SOLOS 2018, is a kinetic installation that collects and distributes air, mimicking the inhalation and exhalation of breath. While some of Derry's past work has been larger than life, *Air Pump* is built on a more human scale. The work evokes the ephemerality of air and the fragility of the human bodies that cannot sustain themselves without it.

ALSO ON VIEW AT ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER

IN THE WYATT RESIDENT ARTISTS GALLERY

Negar Ahkami: *Fantasy Will Set You Free*

On View: April 14 – June 2, 2018

AAC resident artist Negar Ahkami creates expressive, tactile paintings inspired by Iranian art and the many global visual traditions that intersect with Iran's rich art history. Ahkami's emphasis on rhythm and viscosity over virtuosity is inspired by NYC street art of the 1980s, German expressionism, and urban street life and dance club culture. The imagined dancers in *Fantasy Will Set You Free* invoke dance floors from the artist's youth, from New York City night clubs, to parties organized by Ahkami's parents for the growing Iranian immigrant community in the 1980s and 1990s. The work in *Fantasy Will Set You Free* places Iranian art and humanity in a broader, joyful context, continuing Ahkami's longtime engagement with Orientalism and stereotype subversion. Above all, the exhibition is an impassioned escape from depressing news, for the viewer as well as the artist. Ahkami relives the spirit of the dance floor in her studio, by getting lost in spontaneous gestures, flamboyant poses, and a riot of rhythmic patterns.

IN THE JENKINS COMMUNITY GALLERY

HB Woodlawn: *Picturing Disaster: The Beauty of Bees*

On View: April 14 – June 2, 2018

Organized by instructor Faylinda Kodis, this exhibition will present work from H-B Woodlawn Seniors who have spent their high school careers focusing on the visual arts. *Picturing Disaster: The Beauty of Bees* explores the effects of environmental destruction on the honey bee population. Honey bees play an extremely important role in our ecosystem and the threat to their existence impacts the survival of humanity. These student artists confront this pressing issue through didactic drawings and other two-dimensional works, highlighting the bees' beauty and significance in our world.

ABOUT ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER

Location: 3550 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 12-5 pm, or by appointment

AAC's exhibitions and their attendant lectures, workshops, and panel discussions offer opportunities for dialogue, and ultimately serve to illustrate the value of contemporary art —specifically, what it is, how it works, and why it matters in our daily lives. Established in 1974, Arlington Arts Center (AAC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit contemporary visual arts center dedicated to presenting and supporting new work by regional artists. Through exhibitions, educational programs, and subsidized studio spaces, AAC serves as a bridge between artists and the community. AAC is housed in the historic Maury School, and boasts nine exhibition spaces, working studios for thirteen artists, and three classrooms. At 17,000 square feet, AAC is one of the largest non-federal venues for contemporary art in the Washington DC metropolitan area. For more information, visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org or call 703.248.6800.

Our programs are made possible through the generous support of the The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Virginia Commission for the Arts/NEA, Arlington County through the Arlington Cultural Affairs division of Arlington Economic Development and the Arlington Commission for the Arts, The Arlington Community Foundation, and individual contributors.



###
