

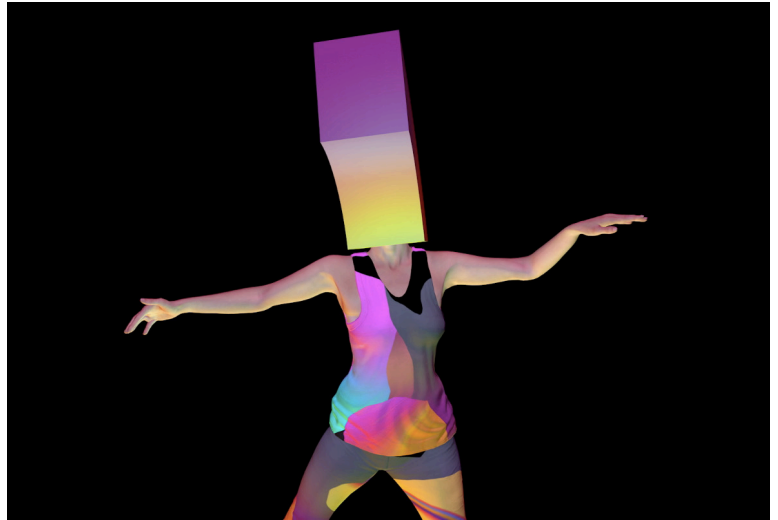


Arlington Arts Center Media Contact:
Laura Devereux
703 248 6800
laura.devereux@arlingtonartscenter.org
www.arlingtonartscenter.org

Arlington Arts Center presents: *Open World*
On View: June 16 – September 29, 2018
Opening Reception: Saturday, June 16, 6-9pm

Arlington Arts Center is pleased to present *Open World*, an exhibition featuring eight contemporary artists and artist teams who engage in world-building through installation, video, digital media, sculpture, and collage. The exhibition opens on June 16, 2018 from 6-9pm and runs from June 16, 2018 through September 29, 2018.

In video game design, the term “open world” refers to a game environment in which players are able to move relatively freely through the game’s virtual setting, rather than being tied to a traditional linear structure and a more limited set of objectives. The phrase resonates with the world-building strategies employed by these eight artists. They create spaces and environments, whether virtual or physical, and invite their viewers to enter into these new worlds. They construct narratives or introduce characters that help the audience move through and understand the alternate realities and imagined spaces they’ve created.



Plakookee, *Crypto\$Crystal*, 2018

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING:

Opening Reception: Saturday, June 16, 6-9pm

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

Gallery Talk: Saturday, September 29, 1-3pm

A walking tour and discussion of *Open World* and *Within/Between* with the artists in the exhibitions.

EXHIBITING ARTISTS:

Rachel Frank

Rachel Frank merges the disciplines of sculpture, video, and performance to explore connections between the natural and the manmade, the animal and the political, the past and the present. In two ongoing projects, *Rewilding* and *Vapors*, she draws from environmental theory, political activism, and natural history to explore the epochal shifts, transitions, and ruptures in our historical and contemporary landscapes. Inspired by rewilding, the practice of reintroducing species to areas where they formerly thrived but have since gone extinct, Frank seeks to mine the memories of the landscape itself and explore the role natural actors may play

in offsetting the damage done by human development. *Vapors* examines the growing tensions between the natural world and the manmade using animals of the Pleistocene era to consider climate change and man's impact during the age of the Anthropocene.

Jodie Mim Goodnough

In photography, performance, sculpture, and video, Jodie Mim Goodnough looks at the history of psychiatry and psychology through a gendered lens. In *The Yellow Wallpaper*, a new digital installation, she references another artist whose work explored similar themes. Written in 1892, Charlotte Perkins Gilmore's short story *The Yellow Wallpaper* centers on a woman who, after being diagnosed with "a temporary nervous depression – a slight hysterical tendency" is locked in an attic room by her husband for a "rest cure." The isolation and lack of stimulation from this treatment drives the woman to psychosis. Goodnough's installation, created from a 3D model of a contemporary psychiatric hospital, explores the paternalistic nature of our current mental health care system.

Rachel Guardiola

Rachel Guardiola explores the human relationship to the wilderness through the construction of fantastical narratives that follow the habits of cyborg or chimera characters and the ecology of the earth-like planets they traverse. She combines analog and digital technologies, including photography, film, video, sound, alternative processes, and projected installations to construct mythologies of these future-past topographies. She draws inspiration and motivation from her own physical navigation through extreme landscapes, including solitary travel through extreme Arctic climates in 2016-2017.

Azikiwe Mohammed

In the ongoing project *Jimmy's Thrift of New Davonhaime*, Azikiwe Mohammed imagines a thrift shop in the fictional town of New Davonhaime. Mohammed named the town by combining the names of five American cities with some of the highest black-population densities: New Orleans, LA; Detroit, MI; Birmingham, AL; Jackson, MI; and Savannah, GA. Mohammed imagines New Davonhaime not as a utopia – a category of place that is, by definition, impossible – but rather as a place that could actually exist. It is based on five actual locations. While not being perfect, it might have the potential to provide something for black and brown people – a sense of safety, a sense of comfort – they are denied in many parts of the United States today. In an installation for *Open World*, Mohammed creates a park space in New Davonhaime, imagining the world a visitor to *Jimmy's Thrift* would encounter just outside the shop's doors.

Nicholas O'Brien

Nicholas O'Brien is an artist and writer researching games, digital art, and network culture. He uses digital and interactive story-telling technologies to speculate on the civic and social history of forgotten or otherwise neglected spaces. *Cross Timbers*, his contribution to *Open World*, is an interactive essay game that contemplates the untold histories of a Midwestern region by the same name. The area, which stretches from Central Texas to Southern Kansas, has been a refuge for travelers, exiles, displaced people, and others pushed to the margins for over four centuries. In *Cross Timbers*, players encounter narratives based on O'Brien's research into the region, while moving through an endless forest created using generative and procedural systems.

Plakookee

Plakookee is a creative collaboration between artists and designers Justin Plakas and Rachel Debuque. Plakas

and Debuque combine sculpture, installation, constructed photography, and new media work, incorporating synthetic and manmade materials to push the boundaries of color, space, and form. In *Crypto\$Crystal*, a two channel video projection included in *Open World*, Plakookee playfully examines the rapid growth in crypto currencies, like bitcoin, and in app production and other digital technology trends. They consider these trends in relation to the renewed Western interest in spirituality and healing practices, including yoga and crystal meditation. Using technology and humor, *Crypto\$Crystal* addresses value and spirituality, examining the frameworks individuals use to make sense of their role within our complicated contemporary world.

Alissa D. Polan

Working in collage, sculpture, and photography, Alissa D. Polan explores the mechanics of photographic representation, consumption, affluence, fantasy, and authenticity. She combines photographs of picturesque places with magazine cutouts of beautiful objects to create surrealistic fantasy landscapes. In *An Elegant Mirage of Scale and Comfort*, a new site-specific installation for Arlington Arts Center's Tiffany Gallery, Polan will construct meta environments for her smaller works on paper. The images she uses are repeated– cutout, obscured, copied, and repurposed – creating a surreal dreamscape that mimics the overwhelming image feeds that surround us.

Stephanie J. Williams

Stephanie J. Williams works in sculpture and video, navigating the legitimacy of taste. In the animation *Pinoy Ploy*, she examines the hybrid nature and migratory patterns of the American food landscape and considers the ways that the food of marginalized communities is exoticized, appropriated, and packaged for a broader audience. The animation's main protagonist, the Balut, is a hybrid, a half-formed fermented duck egg considered a delicacy in Filipino cuisine. As Filipino cuisine has reached a new level of prominence in American foodie culture, Williams considers the ways that the consumption of “exotic” cuisines acts as a stand in for cultural understanding. This examination of food becomes a way for Williams to unpack her own understanding of American-ness as a bi-racial queer cis-gendered female.

ALSO ON VIEW AT ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER

IN THE WYATT RESIDENT ARTISTS GALLERY

Olivia Tripp Morrow & Jen Noone: *Within/Between*

On View: June 16 – September 29, 2018

In *Within/Between*, AAC Resident Artists Olivia Tripp Morrow and Jen Noone explore materiality and form. Jen Noone explores the relationship between the appearance of a thing, its material make up, and its function. In her sculptures and other three-dimensional works, cement is a decorative element, a structural support, and a container, while makeup, gray clay, house paint, and foam insulation board are combined to create forms and surfaces that mimic cement structures. Olivia Tripp Morrow's work addresses the body, memory, sexuality, domesticity, and excess. For *Within/Between*, she uses found, recycled, donated, and discarded blankets and other domestic materials to create structures that evoke bodies, including spaces within spaces that provide shelter or comfort.

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 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 Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Washington Forrest Foundation, and individual AAC supporters.



###
