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ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER

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# ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER'S SPRING 2019 EXHIBITIONS

### *Spring SOLOS 2019*
On view: April 13 – June 7
Opening Reception: Saturday / April 13 / 6-9pm

### Roxana Alger Geffen: *The Binding Ties*
On view: April 13 – June 2
Opening Reception: Saturday / April 13 / 6-9pm

### H-B Woodlawn Seniors: *Onwards and Upwards*
On view: April 13 – June 2
Opening Reception: Thursday / April 25 / 6:30-8pm

Brian Barr
Installation View, *Fictionhearted*
2018

## IN THE MAIN GALLERIES

***Spring SOLOS 2019***
**On view: April 13 – June 7**

ARLINGTON, VA – For *Spring SOLOS 2019*, artists Brian Barr, Emily Campbell, Noel Kassewitz, Greg Stewart, Greta Bergstresser, Jack Warner, and Ying Zhu will install solo-style exhibitions in AAC's seven main gallery spaces. The artists tackle timely environmental issues, draw on their own experiences of childhood, and create installations that shift viewers' perceptions of time, space, and history in work that encompasses sculpture, photography, installation, drawing, and painting.

Artists Greg Stewart and Noel Kassewitz offer unique perspectives while exploring the environmental and societal impacts of climate change. In his interactive installation, Stewart seeks to create a dialogue surrounding individual and collective decision-making in the context of environmental degradation. Kassewitz takes a satirical approach to the subject, creating mixed-media works on canvas that double as flotation devices.

Greta Bergstresser and Jack Warner each draw inspiration from past experiences. Bergstresser's photography reflects her childhood growing up on a self-sustaining farm and considers the various social and political perspectives that can lead individuals to build their lives outside of mainstream cultural norms. Warner, inspired by his own experiences as an educator and AAC's past as a school, creates a new installation that explores the physical and psychological spaces of the educational system.

Working with everyday materials, Ying Zhu creates a site-specific installation emphasizing the fragile, ephemeral, and poetic qualities within and beyond our habitual perceptions. Expanding on past projects, Brian Barr examines the tension between meaning and aesthetics, presenting images stripped of their context and given new associations in

dialogue with one another. Inspired by mythology and history, Emily Campbell constructs a fantastical heterotopic space exploring themes of ritual, hedonism, and crumbling utopia.

For more details about the *Spring SOLOS 2019* artists see below.

## IN THE WYATT RESIDENT ARTISTS GALLERY

**Roxana Alger Geffen: *The Binding Ties***

**On view: April 13 – June 2**

In *The Binding Ties*, Roxana Alger Geffen presents sculptures created in part with objects and materials drawn from her family, ordinary things found in her own attic or her grandmother's junk drawer. Combining materials from different times and places, which were originally intended for a range of practical uses, the artist binds together disparate moments, influences, and intentions. The works reflect the impossibility of forming a single, coherent image of the past, when faced with layers of interpretation, the complexity of individual stories, and our own pre-existing perspectives. Although it may be incomplete, this understanding of the past acts as a foundation for our understanding of the present and, consequently, our understanding of ourselves. Geffen's approach to materials acts as a physical manifestation of the ways we make and remake ourselves, cobbling together the past and present, idealism and ignorance, pride and shame.

## IN THE JENKINS COMMUNITY GALLERY

**H-B Woodlawn Seniors: *Onwards and Upwards***

**On view: April 13 – June 2**

Organized by instructor Faylinda Kodis, *Onwards and Upwards* presents work by H-B Woodlawn seniors who have made a commitment to the visual arts, concentrating on creating a portfolio throughout their time as high school students. As they prepare for graduation and their school moves from its longtime location on Vacation Lane to a new building in Rosslyn, these five students reflect on the experience of moving on and consider the history, ideology, and accomplishments that shape both the school and their time as students.

## PUBLIC PROGRAMS:

**Opening Reception: Saturday / April 13 / 6-9pm**

Opening Reception for *Spring SOLOS 2019* and Roxana Alger Geffen: *The Binding Ties* and open studios with AAC's resident artists.

**Gallery Talk: Saturday / May 18 / 1-3pm**

A walking tour and discussion of *Spring SOLOS 2019* and *The Binding Ties* with the exhibiting artists.

## SPRING SOLOS 2019 ARTISTS:

**Brian Barr, Richmond, VA**

For *Spring SOLOS 2019*, Brian Barr examines the aesthetics of imagery and objects, exploring the space between function, meaning, and aesthetics. Presenting photocopied images as found objects, Barr creates a dialogue between the works through his physical installation on an infrastructure of pipe, drywall, and lumber. Stripping the images of their original context, Barr forces viewers to interpret and decode them. Barr's SOLOS project confronts notions of display and hierarchy, combining images and objects that are exposed, hidden, or revealed.

**Greta Bergstresser, Stroudsburg, PA**

Greta Bergstresser's photographic work examines her personal ideologies in relation to those of others around her. She draws inspiration from her childhood in rural Pennsylvania where her family grew and raised most their

own food. These early ideologies instilled in her a belief in self-sufficiency, which is reflected in the rising "green" movement that disconnects from a consumer-based lifestyle. In the photo series *Guns, Gold, and Going Green*, she explores the political juxtaposition of these beliefs with those of a right-wing philosophy that focuses on stockpiling guns, ammunition, and gold, often in preparation for some unknown future catastrophe. Interested in how these philosophies overlap, Bergstresser examines how everyday people position their lives apart from the cultural norm.

**Emily Campbell, Baltimore, MD**

Emily Campbell's *Reverie* presents a series of disorienting and claustrophobic environments inspired by ancient mythologies, sci-fi imagery, and botanical illustrations that explore themes of ritual and hedonism. She constructs an immersive installation of panoramic figural drawings, gouache paintings, and totem-like sculptures that envelope the viewer in an imagined world, a heterotopia that combines a variety of time periods and blurs the boundaries between history and myth. Campbell's chaotic scenes are depicted in precisely planned compositions with delicate lines, establishing a sense of order amid the irrational and inexplicable actions undertaken within the drawings.

**Noel Kassewitz, Washington, DC**

Through a satirical approach to the deadly serious subject of climate, Noel Kassewitz breaks through the wall of apathy that has built up around the subject. Considering the practical risks of sea level rise from an artist's perspective, Kassewitz consulted with an art conservator and researched options to make her work "climate change ready." The resulting works include paintings wrapped in pool noodles, created from hand-woven canvas embedded with buoys, and crafted from synthetic sailcloth and marine foam. Extending her work's resilience, Kassewitz also expands its functionality, creating pieces that work as aesthetic objects, functional flotation devices, and conversation starters, intended to generate dialogue around a difficult topic.

**Greg Stewart, Harrisonburg, VA**

Greg Stewart's project for *Spring SOLOS 2019* is part of a larger effort to characterize a disappearing world. The artist's installation is centered on an ice cream truck, stocked with a finite number of ice cream bars, created in the shape of birds that have been listed as endangered or threatened in the state of Virginia. AAC visitors are invited to take one of the bars, but their choice impacts the number of ice cream bars available to future visitors. Within the interactive exhibition, Stewart establishes a dilemma that evokes the moral crisis of environmental degradation, while also addressing notions of make believe, attraction, entertainment, and desire.

**Jack Warner, Silver Spring, MD**

In a new installation, Jack Warner explores the spatial environments of educational institutions, considering the impact these spaces have on the missions of the institutions they house and, subsequently, on the students they are built to educate. Working in dialogue with AAC's history as a school, Warner's installation for *Spring SOLOS 2019* evokes the kinesthetic and universal memories of the schoolhouse. Drawing on his experience as a teacher at his former middle school, Warner also explores the practice of naming individual schools after individual people and the impact these eponyms have on the experience of the students who attend.

**Ying Zhu, Washington, DC**

Inspired by her experience as an immigrant, Ying Zhu's work negotiates the confluence of culture and identity. In a new installation created for *Spring SOLOS 2019*, a miniature mountainous setting formed from multicolored thread accompanies images of undulating waves composed of eggshell shards. Through the use of natural materials, Zhu creates a symphony of elements with reassuring rhythms. Her inventive use of ordinary materials emphasizes the fragile, ephemeral, and poetic qualities within and beyond our habitual perceptions. Process and labor are also integral to Zhu's work, as the time required to create her labor intensive installations becomes an important and active component of the work.

## 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.

Arlington Arts Center (AAC) is an independent, 501(c)(3) organization. Our programs are supported in part by The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation; Arlington County through the Arlington Cultural Affairs division of Arlington Economic Development and the Arlington Commission for the Arts; the Virginia Commission for the Arts/National Endowment for the Arts; the Washington Forrest Foundation; and generous individual donors.

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