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ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER'S SPRING EXHIBITIONS 2021

Stretched

On view: March 27 – June 5, 2021

Ryan McCoy: From An Abyss

On view: March 27 – June 5, 2021

Spring Exhibitions Virtual Reception

Thursday, April 8, 6pm – 7:30pm



Mark Joshua Epstein, *New Poems for New Normals*, 2020

ARLINGTON, VA – Arlington Arts Center is pleased to announce its spring exhibitions, including the group exhibition *Stretched* and Ryan McCoy: *From an Abyss* in the Wyatt Resident Artists Gallery.

The exhibitions will be open to the public during AAC's regular gallery hours, Wednesday through Saturday, 12pm to 5pm. Online programs, including an artist talk with resident artist Ryan McCoy and a series of artist talks with the artists included in *Stretched*, will take place in conjunction with the exhibitions.

AAC is pleased to reopen its galleries after an extended winter closure. Visitors will be required to wear masks and maintain six feet of distance from others while inside AAC's building. For more information on public hours and AAC's plan for a safe reopening, go to arlingtonartscenter.org/2021/03/19/spring-reopening.

IN THE MAIN GALLERIES

Stretched

March 27 – June 5, 2021

Featured Artists: Amna Asghar, Rushern Baker IV, Erick Antonio Benitez, Mark Joshua Epstein, Saskia Fleishman, Jen Noone, Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann, Madeline A. Stratton, and Rives Wiley

Stretched presents an expanded perspective on contemporary painting, featuring nine artists whose work is rooted in but transcends the medium. The exhibition includes two-dimensional work by Amna Asghar, Rushern Baker IV, Saskia Fleishman, Jen Noone, and Rives Wiley, shaped and sculptural work by Mark Joshua Epstein and Madeline A. Stratton, and new immersive installations created for the exhibition by Erick Antonio Benitez and Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann.

Ranging from work on canvas to large-scale installation, the exhibition emphasizes the expansive and multi-faceted

approach taken by contemporary artists who work with paint as part of their practice. These diverse approaches include incorporating unconventional materials and techniques into their work and expanding beyond the canvas into three-dimensional objects and installations.

These artists look to the central role played by painting throughout art history, including the legacy of modernist abstraction and the tradition of Chinese landscape painting, to name just two influences visible in the exhibition. In addition to these art historical threads, all nine artists incorporate and reflect visual influences from popular culture and digital aesthetics. Although nearly every work in the show is entirely analog in its physical construction, the visual influence of digital devices and online space proliferates throughout the show.

The diversity of techniques, influences, and materials visible in *Stretched* reflects a long tradition of artists who approach painting as a starting point for broad experimentation, while demonstrating the ways contemporary artists have continued to expand painting within and beyond the canvas.

[For more details about the artists included in *Stretched*, see page 3.](#)

IN THE WYATT RESIDENT GALLERY

Ryan McCoy: *From an Abyss*

March 27 – June 5, 2021

From an Abyss is artist Ryan McCoy's response to the experience of living in America during the Covid-19 pandemic. Executed from just before the pandemic's outset to the present moment, *From an Abyss* is McCoy's visualization of the country's staggering death toll, the emotional and psychological effects of sustained isolation and attacks on truth, facts and America's democracy. Working in an abstract visual language, *From an Abyss* reacts to a dark chapter in America's history through stark abstract compositions, poetic gestures and canvases heavy with the accrual of material excess.

Ryan McCoy is an artist based in the Washington, DC area and a resident artist at Arlington Arts Center. He works in various media, but his primary body of work, developed over the last 15 years, includes paintings that combine materials such as seawater, ash, rust, and baby powder to create iconographies about time, place, and memory. McCoy's work has been exhibited at national and international venues including Connersmith in Washington, DC; Latrobe Contemporary in Victoria, Australia; and Grizzly Grizzly in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. McCoy's paintings are included in numerous private collections throughout the US, Europe, South America, and Australia. He teaches at George Mason University's School of Visual Art.

FULL SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMMING

Spring Exhibitions Virtual Reception | Thursday, April 8, 6pm – 7:30pm

Registration is required. [Register here.](#)

***Stretched* Artist Talk | Thursday, April 22, 6pm – 7:30pm**

Registration is required. [Register here.](#)

***Stretched* Artist Talk | Thursday, April 29, 6pm – 7:30pm**

Registration is required. [Register here.](#)

Ryan McCoy: *From an Abyss* Artist Talk | May 13, 6pm – 7:30pm

Registration is required. [Register here.](#)

***Stretched* Artist Talk | Thursday, May 27, 6pm – 7:30pm**

Registration is required. [Register here.](#)

STRETCHED EXHIBITING ARTISTS

Amna Asghar

In her work on canvas, Amna Asghar draws imagery from the long legacy of Orientalist depictions, ranging from art history to contemporary popular culture. Appropriating imagery from the paintings of Jean-Léon Gérôme, the Disney film *Aladdin*, and contemporary news images, among other material, Asghar crops, manipulates, and corrupts these images. Working from images found online, the artist explores the proliferation and circulation of Orientalist imagery in the current moment.

Amna Asghar lives in Detroit, Michigan. She holds a BFA from Michigan State University and an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. Her work has been exhibited at Indus Detroit (Detroit, MI), The NARS Foundation and Hotel Art Pavillion (New York, NY), The Knockdown Center (Queens, NY), Harmony Murphy Gallery (Los Angeles, CA), Para Site (Hong Kong, CH), Mint Museum (Charlotte, NC), and VisArts (Rockville, MD). Her work has been covered by various media outlets, including *Art in America*, *Two Coats of Paint*, *Artspace*, *Artsy Editorial*, and *The Creator's Project*. Asghar is represented by Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York.

Rushern Baker IV

In his works on canvas, Rushern Baker synthesizes influences from art history, literature and popular culture, including comic books and propaganda. Baker's art historical influences include Soviet Constructivism, Abstract Expressionism, and the history of Black abstraction by artists including Sam Gilliam, Felrath Hines, and Jack Whitten. In mixed media works on canvas, these influences are interpreted through a contemporary eye, melded with influences from popular and digital culture.

Rushern Baker IV has exhibited work both nationally and internationally, including in solo shows at Scaramouche Gallery and the Cooper Union (New York, NY) and Honfluer Gallery and Hemphill Fine Art (Washington, DC) and in group exhibitions at The Third Line Gallery (Dubai), The Harvey B. Gantt Center (Charlotte, NC), Bowie State University (Bowie, MD), Museum of the Contemporary African Diaspora (Brooklyn, NY), Koki Arts (Tokyo, Japan), and at Yale University. He holds an MFA from Yale University and a BFA from The Cooper Union for Advancement of Science and Art. Baker is represented by Hemphill Fine Arts, Washington, DC.

Erick Antonio Benitez

In multi-media installations, Erick Antonio Benitez brings together soundscapes, video, sculpture, painting, and found objects from meaningful locations. These immersive spaces explore place, memory, and landscape, specifically in relation to travel and migration. The installations build on and often include Benitez's two-dimensional work, including painting and textile pieces. As part of *Stretched*, AAC is pleased to present a new installation created by Benitez for the exhibition.

Erick Antonio Benitez is a first generation Salvadoran-American multidisciplinary artist, musician, organizer, and curator based in Baltimore, MD. They hold a BFA in painting from Maryland Institute College of Art and have exhibited at Connersmith (Washington, DC), The Baltimore Museum of Art (Baltimore, MD), Galerie B-312 (Montreal, QC), Metafora Studio Arts (Barcelona, ES) and Simultan Festival (Timișoara, RO). Benitez received the 2018 Janet and Walter Sondheim Award, the Ruby Artist Project grant, The Contemporary: Grit Fund 2, and MASB Travel Artist Award.

Mark Joshua Epstein

Mark Joshua Epstein's mixed media works on shaped panels avoid easy explanation, inviting viewers to adjust their perspectives and expectations. Through a discordant combination of hues, marks, and patterns, matched with irregular shapes and surfaces, Epstein creates a visual evocation of queer experience, without operating within

contemporary expectations of LGBTQ visual culture. Featuring bright colors and vivid patterns in a handmade and irregular aesthetic, the works are both alluring and challenging, disrupting the viewers' easy access to visual pleasure but rewarding a deeper engagement.

Mark Joshua Epstein is an artist and curator and currently a lecturer at the Penny Stamps School of Art and Design at University of Michigan. He has had solo or two person shows at SPRING/BREAK Art Show (NY, NY), Handwerker Gallery, Ithaca College (Ithaca, NY), NARS Foundation Project Space (Brooklyn, NY), Caustic Coastal (Salford, England) Vane Gallery (Newcastle, England), Biquini Wax Gallery (Mexico City, Mexico), and Brian Morris Gallery (New York, NY). In 2021 he will have a solo exhibition at Ortega y Gasset's Skirt Project Space (Brooklyn, NY). He received his MFA from the Slade School of Fine Arts, University College London and a BFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and Tufts University.

Saskia Fleishman

In recent painting work, Saskia Fleishman transforms landscape images into geometric abstractions, drawing on the color studies in Josef Albers' *The Interaction of Color*. Working with images from recent trips as well as older photos taken on family trips around the Chesapeake Bay, Fleishman investigates our systems of seeing and their relation to memory. Incorporating sand and airbrush, and working on burlap, Fleishman builds up surface texture integrating dimensionality to further the visual complexity of the work.

Saskia Fleishman is based in Philadelphia, PA and holds a BFA in painting from Rhode Island School of Design. She has been an artist in residence at Vermont Studio Center, Wassaic Project, PADA Studios, ChaNorth and Trestle Studios, and a curator in residence at Otis College of Art and Design. Fleishman's work has been exhibited in solo and two-person exhibitions at Silo 6776 (New Hope, PA) and Rosenberg Gallery at Goucher College (Baltimore, MD) and in group exhibitions at Tiger Strikes Asteroid (Brooklyn, NY), Hazan Contemporary (New York, NY), Paradise Palace (Brooklyn, NY), Dutoit Gallery (Dayton, OH), Bellevue Art Museum (Bellevue, WA), and 0-0 (Los Angeles, CA), among other venues.

Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann

Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann's large-scale paintings and installations embrace the possibilities of landscape painting, drawing on Chinese landscape traditions while transforming the genre to respond to the ever-widening definitions and depictions of the landscape. Mann's work balances the tension between the artificial and the natural, the chemical and the biological, the organic and the inorganic. Mann approaches the landscape tradition broadly and expansively as an occasion for radical experimentation and confrontation with the world that sustains us. As part of *Stretched*, Mann presents a new installation created for the exhibition.

Mann is the recipient of the Sustainable Arts Foundation grant, a Fulbright grant, the AIR Gallery and Lower East Side Printshop Keyholder Fellowships, and the Mayor's Art Award and Hamiltonian Fellowship in Washington, DC. Her work has been exhibited at the Kreeger Museum, American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Washington, DC), Academy Art Museum (Easton, MD), Walters Art Museum (Baltimore, MD) and at the US consulate in Dubai, UAE, and the US embassy in Yaounde, Cameroon.

Jen Noone

In her recent work, Jen Noone builds on her interest in the materiality of paint and the marketing of beauty. Noone approaches paint as a sculptural material, building up layers of brightly colored latex paint and then strategically scraping away and carving into the surfaces. Working on glass, Noone shows the viewer the interior ground visible through the substrate, rather than the surface of the painting. The actual surface facing the viewer is filled with geometric patterns inspired by the symmetrical forms and negatives spaces of women's athleisure wear. Framing the

exposed undersurface of the painting, the forms evoke the messy materiality of the human bodies contained by our idealized consumer products.

Jen Noone is a mixed media artist born and raised in Harrisburg, PA and based in Annandale, NJ. Noone received her BA in Art Education from Saint Joseph's University and her MFA in Studio Art at American University. Her work has been featured in The Washington Post and exhibited at Terrault Contemporary (Baltimore, MD), Ruby Projects (Fairfax, VA), BWAC and Site:Brooklyn (Brooklyn, NY), Ejecta Projects (Carlisle, PA), WAS Gallery (Bethesda, MD), American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, and Connersmith (Washington, DC). She was highlighted as one of Interview Magazine's Artists on the Verge in 2017 and was a resident artist at Arlington Arts Center from 2018 to 2020.

Madeline A. Stratton

Madeline A. Stratton utilizes paint, textiles, thread, and printmaking to investigate memory through domestic objects and spaces. In shaped and sculptural wall-based work, Stratton draws on colors and patterns that evoke domesticity and daily life. More recently, she has begun creating free-standing sculptures, more directly evoking interiors and architectural structures. By creating silhouettes and simplified structures, she conveys both absence and belonging and emphasizes the instability of memory.

Madeline A. Stratton is a multidisciplinary artist and educator based in Washington, DC. She holds an MFA from the Mount Royal School of Art at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), an MA from Christie's Education, and a BA in Studio Art and History of Art from Vanderbilt University. She has exhibited in solo and two-person shows with IA&A at Hillyer (Washington, DC), Sense Gallery (Washington, DC), Automat Collective (Philadelphia, PA), and Hamiltonian Artists/Studio 1469 (Washington, DC), and in group shows throughout the US and Puerto Rico. In 2018, she completed the Keyholder Residency at Pyramid Atlantic Art Center in Hyattsville, MD where she stayed on as a Printshop Associate until 2020. She was a member of the most recent Sparkplug Collective cohort through DC Arts Center and is currently a Hamiltonian Fellow at Hamiltonian Artists in DC.

Rives Wiley

In her painting work, Rives Wiley depicts figures trapped in an image. They are enclosed within the edges of the canvas but also seem restricted by their surroundings. These idealized interiors mimic the gleaming and seemingly untouched minimalist environments depicted in social media and contemporary advertising. Working from stock photos and digital images, Wiley's work reflects the omnipresent influence that virtual aesthetics have had on our visual culture.

Rives Wiley is an artist based in New York City. Her work has been shown in solo and two-person exhibitions at Hamiltonian Gallery (Washington, DC), NOVA College (Manassas, VA), IA&A at Hillyer (Washington, DC), and S/PLI/T Projects at the Portland Pataphysical Society (Portland, OR) and group exhibitions at SPRING/BREAK Art Show (New York, NY), Rhizome (Washington, DC), School 33 Art Center (Baltimore, MD), and Hemphill at Carroll Square Gallery (Washington, DC). Wiley was a 2016 Hamiltonian Fellow, a Trawick Prize Semi-Finalist in 2011, and a recipient of a 2017 DC Commission for the Arts and Humanities Grant. She holds a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design.

ABOUT ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER

Location: 3550 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA 22201

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Saturday 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 enriching community life by connecting the public with contemporary art and artists through exhibitions, educational programs, and artist residencies. AAC is housed in the historic Maury School, and boasts nine exhibition spaces, working studios for twelve artists, and three classrooms. 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; The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia; and generous individual donors.



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