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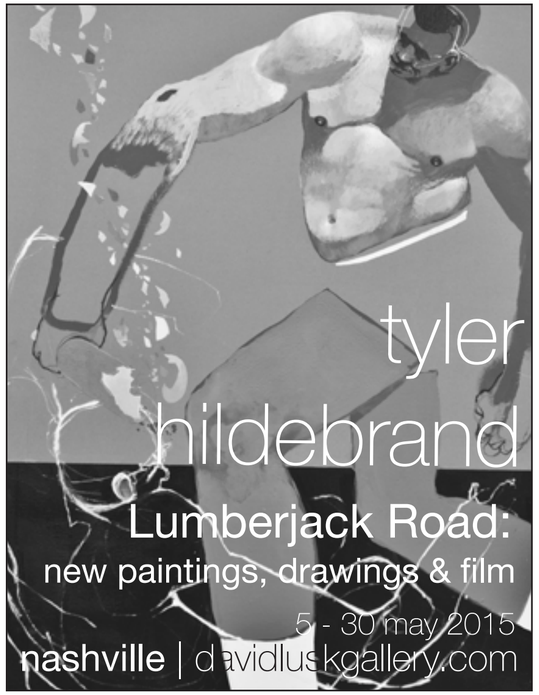

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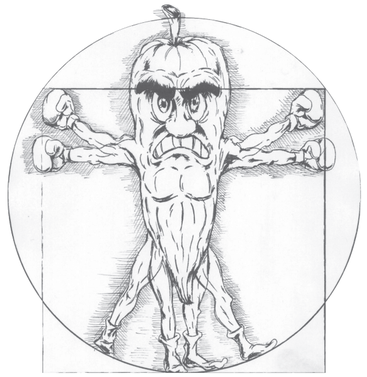

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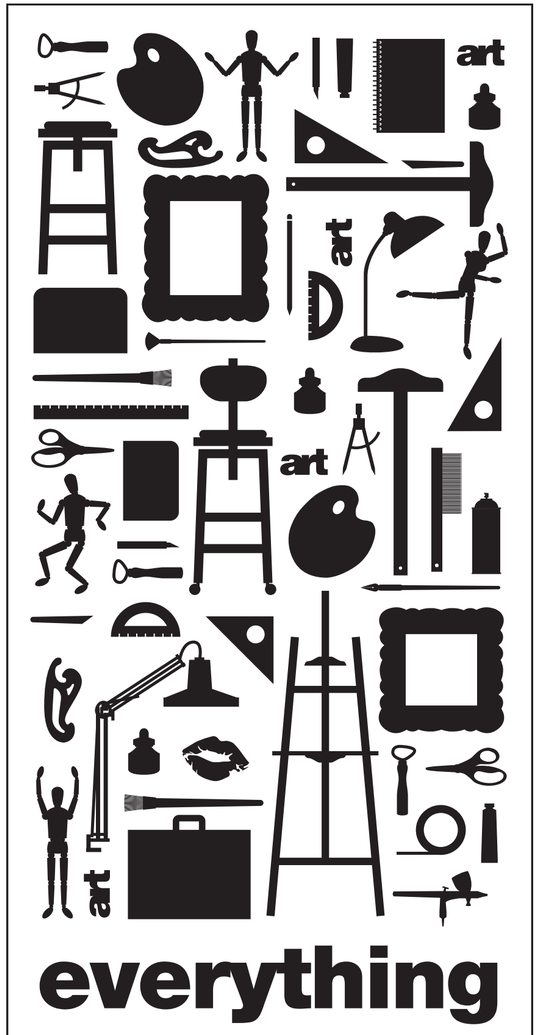

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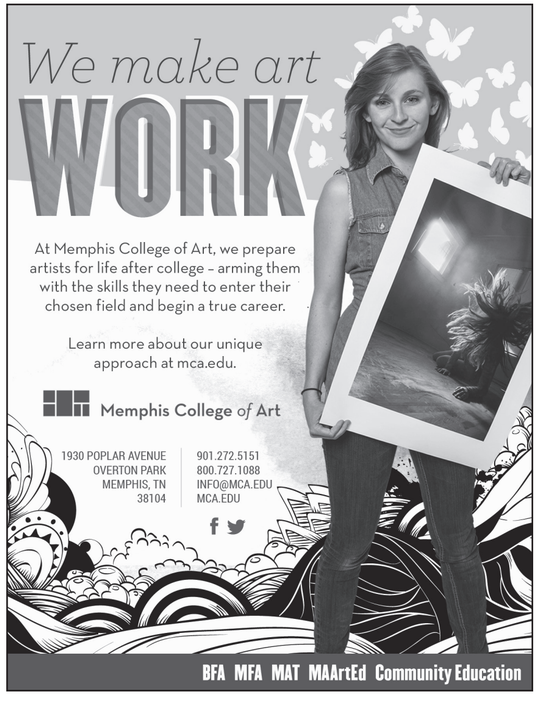

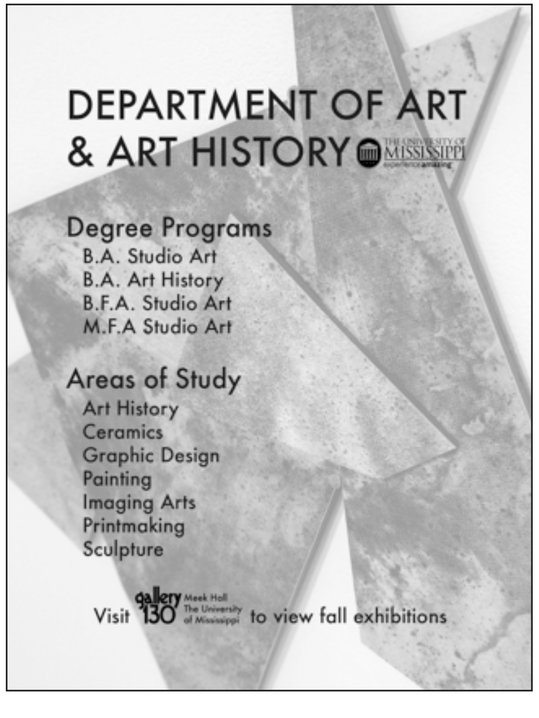

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Cover:

Andi Sherrill Bedsworth, *Tall Bird*, 2014, mixed media with fiber, paint, paper on canvas, 25 1/2 x 37 1/2 inches.

Art in the South is as varied as the people who live in it. There are many artists who paint and draw. The South is also rich in fine crafts including needlework, quilting, etc. I do those things as well, but I combine my lifelong passion for sewing and fibers with painting and drawing to create mixed media fiber pieces that are unique and interesting. My work is made by hand-stitching details onto stretched canvases. This work is part of the *Birds of a Feather* series.

Editorial

Probably the most overtly Southern thing about me is my childhood, and the things most overtly Southern about my childhood are things that I and the people around me never saw as special or definitive of a lifestyle; it was just stuff we did. My grandmother Rosamond, a seamstress, stitched quilts out of scrap cloth — cloth left over from the dresses she made for me, my mom and sister, and other ladies around our tiny town — for every member of our family to use on their beds (yes, every member of the family received a quilt at birth and marriage). My grandfather Bobby farmed cotton and watermelon to pay the bills and my mom Martha cooked a delicious dinner every night, most nights from scratch and without recipes. We all listened and sang along to country music because that's what was on the radio. It never occurred to us that there was any artistry or creativity involved in these day-to-day routines, but, looking back today, I think that's exactly what makes the American South's artistic identity sing — even its most sophisticated art is often saturated with the unpretentious, utilitarian heritage of its locals whether via technique, subject matter, or materials as portrayed, for example, by the varied works in *The Contemporary South*, exhibition which was curated by Chad Allgood of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and reviewed in this issue by Rachel Newell.

I like to think that this little anecdote qualifies me to define "the art of the South." The fact that I've lived south of the Mason-Dixon Line my whole life and am the granddaughter of a woman who went to grade school with Johnny Cash in Dyess, Arkansas surely counts for something, right? The truth is: I don't like the idea of boxing Southern art into a definition that limits its influence. Fortunately, the writers featured in this 81st issue of *Number:* help to illuminate the many faces of the art of the South. Below are a few highlights I'm particularly excited to share with you, the readers.

In "Is Southern Art a Thing: Thoughts from a Technically Southern Arts Writer," Nashville's Sara Estes dares to defy the "Southern" label in all things art in favor of a more universal approach, and quite successfully so. While I would argue that any person, but particularly an artist who tends to be more sensitive to her or his environment than most, would struggle to evade the influence of her or his region of residence, Estes posits the globalization of our era as a qualifier to debunk the "Southern art" myth. "As it stands now, artists working in the South no more need to be classified as 'southern artists' than surgeons here need to be classified as 'southern surgeons,'" Estes explains — a highly relevant and critical perspective on Southern regionalism hype. Though championing the voice and tradition of one's geographical peers via artistic expression isn't necessarily trumped by "international exposure," the author presents a believable case that unravels the sometimes hokey, overly sentimental assumptions people make about artists working in the South.

In support of Estes' argument is Dorothy Joiner's review of *Intersections: Illuminated Archive* by Vesna Pavlovi exhibited at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. A Serbia-born artist investigates the role of photography in the history of Modernism by creating "digitally manipulated images…from negatives stored in the institution's archives." Other than the artist's Tennessee address, nothing about this artist or art expressly reads "Southern." An artist working in the South, exhibiting in the North, and calling Europe her birth-place, however, keeps the South engaged in the universal art conversation and demonstrates the global reach our region wields.

In contrast, artist Joshua Brinlee of Memphis makes no bones about growing up in the South and being "shaped by it," but in his interview by Justin Bowles, Brinlee admits to a "love-hate relationship" with the region he calls home. Brinlee's unique photographic fusions of art historical images, his own self-portraits, and feminist themes represent much more than the American South; he does "not consider [himself] a 'Southern artist,' but an artist living and working in the South." As an art historian by education, I am particularly drawn to Brinlee's works (*Self Portrait as Cut Above the Rest*, for example), which harken to a certain sophistication of, say, eighteenth-century European portraiture, yet brings a new-meets-old edge not unlike Kehinde Wiley or Donald Roller Wilson.

At the risk of being redundant, I want to recite a little story I shared with writer and former *Number:* editor Chuck Beard when he interviewed me a few weeks ago in preparation for my guest editorship of this issue, because it's the best metaphor I can give for the way I see the South as it relates to artists who live here. I went to Washington, D.C. for the first time as a junior in high school for a young leaders conference with over a thousand other students from across the country, and I was one of only three from Arkansas. For an entire week, I had random kids seeking me out and asking me to talk — seriously, just to talk — so they could hear my Southern accent. I had never thought twice about how my voice sounded, because in all honesty I had never been exposed to people unlike me. The whole experience opened my eyes to a bigger world view, and at the same time revealed something special and sought after about my culture.

All that to say: we can't escape our immediate environment; it will always seep into our subconscious one way or another. But we can put ourselves out there and make a proactive effort to participate in the larger arts community. Doing so will inevitably expand our individual perspectives, undoubtedly reflected in the art we create, and also put our beloved region — "the South" — on the global map.

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Contribute feature length articles that help define the art of the South (1500-1800 words). Who are the artists that are currently defining or have defined our region. How are they impacting the visual arts locally, regionally, nationally and/or internationally?

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Number: 82 Criticism and Aesthetics - Deadline March 4th
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Elaine Slayton Akin is currently working at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, TN.

Is Southern Art a Thing?

Thoughts from a Technically Southern Arts Writer

When I woke up this morning in Nashville, I checked, as I routinely do, the Guardian, the New Yorker, and the Times. When I went to the coffee shop next to my apartment, I encountered more people from elsewhere than from here; my best friend is in graduate school in Minneapolis; my father is visiting his family in Chicago; my boyfriend is currently pacing around the living room on his phone with his writing partner in San Diego. On the wall above my desk hang two pieces of art, one by a photographer from Yugoslavia, the other a print-maker from Brooklyn. I just checked the latest post from a great South African blogger; on the coffee table is a book of short stories by a centuries-dead Russian man; and I'm on the couch, on my Macbook, wrapped in a thick, cozy shawl I bought from an elderly street-vender in Mexico City last Spring.

I don't know what it means to say I am a Southerner — which, by definition, is a correct label. From where I sit, my world is a complex collage of a vast assortment of influences, cultures, eras and places — making it increasingly difficult to justify the use of such a narrow-sounding term. My surroundings, like many artists and writers I know, reach far beyond what is to be found in this city, this state, and this region.

The regional labeling of art is problematic, as the distinction — in this case "Southern" — is increasingly irrelevant, often incorrect, and virtually indefinable as a style or doctrine. As it stands now, artists working in the South no more need to be classified as "southern artists" than surgeons here need to be classified as "southern surgeons."

We now live in an era of global consciousness, and thus our location is less of limitation, less of a status marker, and less of a factor. Thirty years ago, it meant something to be an artist living in New York. It meant you had exclusive access to current art, writing, and conversation. Now, the landscape has changed and the rules are being re-written; we all have access to art's cutting edge if we want it. Anyone in any town, provided they have a secure internet connection, can subscribe to *Hyperallergic, Art News, ArtForum*, etc. We can parse the online galleries of the Met and the Louvre, and the Uffizi; order countless contemporary art and theory books; listen in on two-hour-long Yale art history courses; and can submit work to galleries around the world. The gates have dissolved in profound ways. While some immutable place-based limitations and perks remain, by and large, a lustrous art-center locale no longer grants any artist a sweeping upper hand.

Regionalism is being pulled at the seams by several factors. Not only is aesthetic culture and style becoming more homogenized (you can find driftwood tables, chevron patterns, and deer antlers on the mantles in homes all across cross this great country), but artists and creative types are getting priced out of art hubs like New York and San Francisco. They're packing up and moving to smaller, more do-able cities like Nashville or Atlanta. An ever-growing number of artists living and working in the South have moved here from Brooklyn or Boston or London; and in such cases, to impose upon their work some element of "southerness" would be false and far-reaching. On the other hand, many burgeoning talents born in Tennessee have promptly removed themselves in the name of graduate school or other opportunities, and in the process, wholly dismantled their regional descriptor.

Some artists embrace being a "southern artist," whatever it means to them, often to their detriment. In general, the use of externalized labels, as opposed to those referencing the work's conceptual or stylistic framework, can constrict and misgovern the artwork as a whole. William Eggleston, one of the most influential photographers of the 20th century, does not identify as a southern artist for this reason, though many may consider him a poster boy for the designation: he was born in the Mississippi Delta, lives in Memphis, and his photographs depict a pointed and distinct view of the American South. However, as Rachel Kushner wrote, "his subject matter extends well beyond a Southern vernacular, and his photographs embody emotive qualities that are not rooted in the colloquial, but seem a unique refraction of the banal and the evocative." It seems artists aiming to make a global impact would similarly refuse to let the work be restricted by the margins of their geography. That is not to say that one should eschew their background, but rather one should attempt to transcend it and broaden one's scope and appeal.

It serves to be pointed out the distinction between a southern artist and southern work. The former is watery and problematic; the latter is the stuff of mythology, god-making, or the alluring Southern gothic aesthetic. It is the work made in direct dialogue with the landscape, cultural history, or the political/social constructs of the South; where applying the "southern" label makes sense because it points to the actual substance of the work. A great example of an artist making southern work is photographer Tamara Reynolds, whose recent series "Southern Route" was featured on the *New York Times' Lens Blog*. Reynolds makes images that explicitly aim to portray and explore the history, stereotypes, and cultural evolution of the South.

Hovering somewhere in the grey area of this distinction is painter Dane Carder, who was born in Tennessee, has lived and worked here his entire life, and whose paintings depict various scenes and wounded soldiers from the Civil War. When asked if he is a southern artist, he hesitates but eventually says yes. When asked if he makes southern work, he says no — pointing out that his subject matter is a vehicle through which he explores larger themes of death, transience, spirituality, and civil unrest. The work is not necessarily about the Civil War.

On the far end of the spectrum might be someone like Vesna Pavlovic, a Serbian-born artist and Vanderbilt professor who has lived in Nashville for over five years and maintains a highly visible and influential role in the Nashville art scene. Her work explores the technological aspects of photographic history; a recent series investigates the photographic representation of history and collective memory of post WWII Yugoslavia. Though she is well woven into the fabric of the city's art consciousness, she is not southern and the American South does not influence her work. On the same note, nationally renowned filmmaker and artist Harmony Korine lives in Nashville and is represented by Gagosian Gallery — to claim he is a southern artist means next to nothing.

Maybe the tendency toward Southernism/regionalism is borne out of the current need for community making amidst the expansive global consciousness. Still it becomes troublesome when we consider the progress in fine art that has been made in the last two centuries — if we are going on the given that it has been "progress" — requires that an artist operate as an individual outside of her community.

For certain traditions like food or agriculture, the idea of preserving and defining what is local is a matter of quality and authenticity. Visual art works in the opposite direction, whereas quality is determined by one's participation in a broader historical dialogue, not by adhering to a localized tradition.

If we try to define "the art of the South" or try to prove that southern artists have something innately in common, we will continue to come up empty-handed, especially now. The effort itself is naïve, counter-productive, and dismissive of the vast diversity of artists and writers working here. At this point, as an art community, we are competing globally, and our focus should be on building (continuing to build) serious support, opportunities, and infrastructure to help individual artists in the region gain national and international exposure. In that process, there is no need to define or distinguish those great artists living in the South as anything other than hard-working, globally relevant artists.

Vesna Pavlovic, *Fototeka*, 2013, From Fabrics of Socialism Series, Photographic Installation, Size Variable.

Vesna Pavlovic, *Negativ Ton*, 2013, From Fabrics of Socialism Series, Endura Metallic Print, 30X40 inch.

Dane Carder, *Life*, 2009, 27"X27", Acrylic and Oil on Canvas. Courtesy of Artist.

Dane Carder, *F.C. Foss*, 2014, 79"X48", Acrylic on Panel. Courtesy of artist.

Sara Estes is a writer and curator living in Nashville, TN.

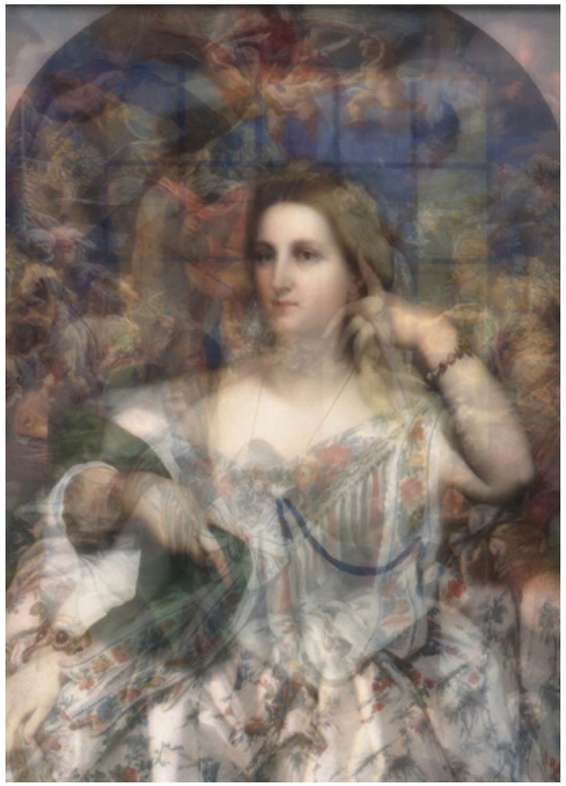
Interview: Joshue Brinlee

Southern artists are labeled as such. Just like artists from other regions, inspiration can come from the experiences that form one's history and identity. Yet for Southerners, these experiences are often perceived as singularly linked to our region, inextricable from mythical ether around us. Artists from the South have to fight against the mysteries and legends in non-Southerners' minds, as well as an entrenched cultural hegemony. In William Faulkner's *Absalom! Absalom!*, Quentin Compson's Harvard roommate memorably inquired, "Tell about the South. What's it like there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all." Artists in the South struggle with these inquiries perhaps more than artists in other regions, forced to divulge some type of appeasing answers while championing the radical notion that art in the South is not a static, antediluvian quagmire, but a thriving ecology.

In contemporary fashion, Memphis artist Joshua Brinlee's work may not explain what it's like to be Southern in explicitly Southern terms, but his work addresses cultural expectations and definitions of identity, using art history as the basis for contemporary, digital collage. Brinlee was recently included in the *Pandora's Children* exhibition at Rhodes College as one of the artists producing contemporary feminist work. Co-curator Laura Gray Teekell McCann chose works from the *Transformations* and *Sirens* series to represent the ever-expanding terrain of feminist work. McCann said this about Brinlee's work: "By digitally manipulating paintings that were once safely part of the art historical canon, he addresses feminism from a standpoint that hails from the digital era." This appropriation of familiar works creates what Brinlee describes as "an uncanny feel" as the layers fuse and merge in unfamiliar ways. McCann goes on to add, "Josh's work allowed me to present a somewhat academic or art historical approach to a wholly contemporary show."

It is Brinlee's love and appreciation for history that inspired Dixon Gallery and Gardens to ask him to create work for the Mallory/Wurtzburger series during their 40th anniversary year in 2016. Associate Curator Julie Pierotti explains that he will use the Dixon's gardens, architecture, fine art collection and their world- renowned decorative arts collection for inspiration. Pierotti says, "We are excited to see how he will manipulate the works of art we know so well through his innovative photographic methods." Combining layers of images from the past and present, Brinlee is honored to pay homage to this museum that has inspired him for years.

I recently spoke with Joshua Brinlee about his art, being Southern and teaching.



Joshua Brinlee, *The Femme Fatale*, 2013, 18" x 24", Digital Print. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Just as your work appropriates and redefines archetypes of identity, Southern culture is expanding and becoming more multifaceted. What are your thoughts on Southern identity? How do you feel about being a Southern artist?

I grew up in the South and have been shaped by it. I have experienced its greatness and have suffered its torment. The South represents a love-hate relationship for me. On one hand there is great diversity and human spirit and on the other, hate supported by tradition and ignorance. Even though the South has a deep-rooted past, it is my own history and traditions that keep me here. In order to promote change you do not flee, you stand and let your voice be heard. I do not consider myself a "Southern artist," but an artist living and working in the South.

In your MFA work at Memphis College of Art, your final series included portraits of women and men, using your face for each portrait. Your subsequent two series, *Transformations* and *Sirens*, focus on portraits of women. Why do you use your own face for every person?

In all the portraits I use my own face, whether the image is male or female. In essence, all of these works are self-portraits, exploring different facets of identity and archetypes. My MFA portraits explored men and women looking out at the viewer, judging with their gaze. As a Southern gay man, I relate to feelings of being judged, of being "other." In this idea of being "other," labels or stereotypes are spoken over individuals to further their "otherness."

This past fall, you were included in the *Pandora's Children* exhibition at Rhodes College as one of the artists representing the new face of feminism. Where do you place yourself in the contemporary discourse of feminism? Do you consider yourself a feminist artist?

In a sense, yes, I am a feminist artist. At the root of my work is the idea of being "other," which is part of the feminist discourse. My *Transformations* series is very feminist. These portraits address female archetypes such as *The Femme Fatale*, *The Mother*, *The Visionary* or *The Temptress*. I combined multiple images, largely appropriated from 18th and 19th century high society portraits of women, breaking them free from their provenance of the history of the sitter. I wanted to recontextualize these women, hopefully creating a sympathetic feel in the viewer, not just a passing glance at the archetypes they have represented for several hundred years.

The *Sirens* series are different kinds of portraits, with figures moving through a landscape in flux. These combine layers of the past with an ever-emerging present. Why did you choose sirens as the focus of your recent series?

I was interested in the idea of the mythical sirens, luring men to their death, consuming and destroying ships. Most of the *Sirens* exist in historical seascapes, with ships caught in a vortex of destruction. Many of the ships are crashing in the background and some of the sirens' dresses look like nets made for trapping these ships. Homosexuals, like sirens, are viewed as destroyers of worlds, so I explored this idea of someone being a destroyer and a muse at the same time. The Hollywood "sirens" of the 1930s and '40s, like the mythical sirens, also used their sexual identity to gain a position of power, and many of the poses I used originated from photographs of Veronica Lake, Ava Gardner and other "sirens." Drag queens are another type of siren, using their appearance, talents and personality to seduce.

Laura Gray Teekell McCann says that your "method of appropriation allows the traditional roles, attributes, and archetypes assigned to women in art to be re-imagined." Your process aligns with your concept of breaking the subjects of these portraits free of their conventions. Why are you attracted to appropriation and creating new work from preexisting images? Are you contemporizing old paintings or do you see the paintings as material for contemporary work?

Appropriation is now part of the contemporary art landscape and with my love of art history, is a natural way of working for me. In this digital age we have access to thousands of images from a myriad of sources. There is a wealth of information that can be pulled from each painting I use. The traditional method of collage was to take physical pieces and combine them, so I call my work "digital collage." This combining and layering of digital pieces is similar to how we take pieces from our memory, reforming them into something new in our dreams.

I am making new work, not just a riff on a preexisting work. I combine many layers from many sources to create new images. As I manipulate and transform the images, I am breaking them free of their history, giving them new life and creating new opportunities for them to be appreciated.

In several of your recent shows, you show large digital prints ensconced in some fairly elaborate Rococo style frames. Yet, these imposing frames are painted white. Why?

The expectation of the viewer is to see highly decorative, gold frames with a Rococo, or even Baroque, sensibility. A gold frame would only mimic these past styles, but painting the frames white contemporizes them and subverts the expectations of value that a gilded frame connotes. The frames become part of the piece, not just a decorative accent.

In addition to your work being well received, you were appointed Assistant Professor and Foundations Coordinator at the University of Mississippi in Oxford this year. What is your role as a professor and a professional artist?

I feel very fortunate to work with such an amazing group of educators and artists. I have the responsibility of guiding the foundations program and establishing a solid arts foundation for students. By introducing students to new ways of seeing and thinking, I am encouraging them to cultivate critical thinking skills and find purpose in their art making process. I want them to embrace differences and diversity as they explore new media. They are finding their voice, and I am a guide to help them speak.

Joshua Brinlee, *Self Portrait as Pillar of Excellence*, 2012, 36" x 48", Digital Print. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Joshua Brinlee, *Self Portrait as Cut Above the Rest*, 2012, 36" x 48", Digital Print. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Justin Bowles is an artist and educator living and working in Memphis.

Into the Ether:

Felix Kelly's Haunting Images of America's Deep South

One would not expect a collection of paintings depicting America's Deep South to have been created by a New Zealander, but this is the case with the artist Felix Kelly. Kelly was considered by fellow artists and critics in England as a Neo-Romantic artist, and by the 1960s, he had attained near celebrity status in Britain, having regular sell-out shows at Arthur Tooth & Sons Gallery, among others that were well-reviewed and received.

The artist's most popular subject among his patrons was his house portraits placed within ethereal, Surrealist inspired settings. Kelly remarked that he "felt compelled to make a record of great homes… before grim things happen to them," illustrating an interest in preserving an architectural heritage of regal homes with historic charm. This article considers those paintings that showcase the grand estates and terrain that the artist discovered while traveling through America's Deep South that offer a unique perspective from a New Zealander's point of view.

The artist's first trip to the United States was for a solo exhibition at the New York gallery, Portraits, Inc. in 1947. Kelly's house studies provided an interesting alternative to traditional portraiture. In an exhibition review, a critic emphasized Kelly's link to portraiture by titling his article "Houses are Human to the Artist," and noted that when painting a home Kelly creates a window 'with the care which a portrait painter would devote to an eye, noting with accuracy the veins and wrinkles of stone and brick." This first visit to the United States marked a turning point in Kelly's career, and led to regular excursions to America that were documented in a multitude of paintings.

Although Kelly's American gallery was based in New York City, his visits to the States tended to be to its Deep South, due to the fact that he had acquired several friends and patrons in the region. Initially hired by the south's elite to paint portraits of their homes, Kelly eventually used this subject to create his own visions of the landscape that he found so captivating. While touring the area, Kelly became intrigued by its scenery, especially its mansions and plantation homes that spotted the landscape. As a lover of architecture, he was particularly drawn to those structures that recalled America's past. Lured by the rural architectural charm and river culture that he encountered, Kelly composed a number of paintings depicting areas in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

For instance, while in Alabama, he was drawn to the area's historic homes. One of particular interest to the artist was Rosemount, a Greek revival plantation completed in the 1850s, located in Forkland, Alabama. When Kelly visited Rosemount, the plantation home was abandoned and left in a derelict state. However, in the painting the artist has restored the grand property. Kelly has placed three antique automobiles in front, a dapper gentleman, and a red and white striped canopy tent, perhaps suggesting that an event will soon take place. The items placed on the front lawn all suggest that the home is still in use, and no longer abandoned.

Along with plantation homes, another element that signified the south for Kelly and were frequently included in his images of the south were the various water transportation vehicles such as grand ferry steamboats, snag boats or a lone rowboat that he envisioned cruising down its rivers. Thus, this feature is often included in his house portraits, even when the original home was not located by a waterway. As in *The Bandstand*, a passenger steamboat has come ashore to collect riders, the title suggesting a celebratory excursion down the enchanted river. In the composition's foreground, we see what remains of a striped awning attached to the ruin of a portico, now overgrown with vegetation.

While traveling through the state of Mississippi, it was the life along the river that appealed most to Kelly, as he painted several works depicting the culture of the region. In the town of Natchez, Mississippi, Kelly discovered Stanton Hall, a Greek revival plantation built in 1857. In *House on the Bluff*, Kelly placed the mansion high up on a ridge overlooking the river, when in reality the home is located several blocks away. Although a particular architectural site inspired the artist he often placed the structure within a highly composed environment altering the experience of the land. At first glance, the misty scene appears desolate, as if the estate has been abandoned, but upon closer observation, one discovers the ghost of a lone figure in front of the home, watching a steamboat come around the bend, revealing touches of life that emphasize the connection between plantation and river culture.

In *Twin Houses, Mississippi* one can barely make out the large home located along the river, as the area's overgrown Spanish moss has nearly taken over the entire scene. One views an empty lawn chair and boat docked along the banks, and to the right, two striped canopies suggesting perhaps the memory of an outdoor fête. While In *Steamboat on the Mississippi* from 1978, Kelly created a lush waterway with abundant vegetation as the passenger vessel makes its way past an abandoned plantation home and a town nestled along opposite banks of the shore. Kelly creates an eerie, smoky landscape in *Mississippi Ghosts* that features an old southern mansion along the river with a steamboat banked along its shore. The only evidence that the scene is not entirely desolate is the presence of steam rising from the riverboat.

While traveling through the south, Kelly was also interested in depicting the ruins of America's grand estates, and he documented these in a number of paintings. For instance, in his work, *Windsor Ruins, Mississippi* from 1989 Kelly rendered what remained of an 1861 Greek revival plantation that was destroyed by a fire in 1890. In the image, the artist relocated its remaining 23 Corinthian columns to the edge of a river when in fact they are located in a wooded terrain. Kelly again includes a working steam powered snag boat passing by, blending elements of both the present and the past in one scene.

Another plantation left in disrepair that caught the artist's eye is found in Louisiana. Belle Grove, in Iberville Parrish, sits nestled along the Mississippi River just south of Baton Rouge. The plantation completed in 1857 was in poor condition by the 20th century. The vegetation has taken over the mansion in Kelly's *Belle Grove in Ruin, Louisiana* from 1976, where in the work the artist exaggerates the structure's state of decay.

Aside from capturing mansions in a dilapidated state, Kelly was also attracted to the unusual architectural flourishes of one particular home that he discovered while in Louisiana. Steamboat House, built in 1909, is located just outside of New Orleans, and appealed so much to Kelly that he painted it on three different occasions. In each of Kelly's interpretations, the home has been placed in different locations and terrain, and the architectural elements have also been altered to exaggerate the structure's verticality, demonstrating his interest in the dramatic, theatrical, and sometimes spatial confusions.

Although depicting different locations of the south, Kelly's paintings share many commonalities. As the artist once made clear, he "felt compelled to make a record of great homes… before grim things happen to them," but he was not often offering an authentic account. In most cases, Kelly selects an architectural site for inspiration then alters the scene by either restoring a dilapidated structure or exaggerating its age and rough shape. He also, as we have seen, transforms the original surrounding landscape. Although the artist's statements suggest an interest in preservation, a type of restorative process, the result is a highly crafted vision of the artist's own creation. Kelly conjures up an idyllic past that provides a rather idealized view of a passing era that is clearly detached from such truths as political tensions relating to slavery and the economy that were plaguing much of the south at the time the plantations were constructed. And, as he once wrote to Herbert Read, "I like to compose… not only… the visible but the invisible people or things once there."

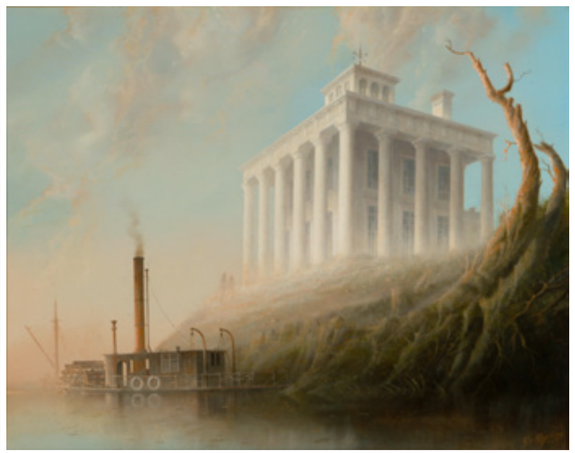
When considering these paintings and Kelly's remarks, it becomes evident that they were a way to artistically render his "…Neo-romantic mourning of the passing of time." His works are nostalgic. The historic homes that Kelly illustrates seem to exist in a bygone era, as they are often placed within a deserted, misty, atmospheric haze. His river cruisers and plantation homes function as relics of the past and signifiers of a rural, southern terrain.

Perhaps one of the reasons why these southern elements had such an appeal for Kelly was that they reminded him of his homeland of New Zealand that he had left behind. Many of New Zealand's historic homes were known for their architectural charm, often including decorative wooden flourishes and turreted sections that offered panoramic views of the surrounding sea and waterways. In *A New Zealand Childhood Remembered*, Kelly paints a grand hotel overlooking the water complete with a paddle steamer docked ashore. While *New Zealand River Scene* depicts a fishing boat banked alongside a 19th-century, wooden planked home. The southern plantation homes that Kelly most often selected were white Greek revival structures, and not the more common red-brick variety. Perhaps this was another feature that reminded him of the whitewashed, weather-boarded houses of New Zealand's architectural past.

The title of this article, "Into the Ether," also speaks to the relative obscurity of the artist. As scholars, it is often intriguing to consider which artists become significant to art's history. At his prime, Kelly was a prolific and successful one who was represented by esteemed London and New York City based galleries that both specialized in the sale of landscape paintings; and his work was consistently well-received and patronized. However, there is a lack of scholarly interest in this artist who painted for over 60 years. Aside from a few gallery catalogs centered on his exhibitions, only Donald Bassett's recent publication, *Fix: The Art and Life of Felix Kelly*, studies the artist's oeuvre. Further, Kelly's paintings housed at the R. W. Norton Art Gallery are the only substantial collection on public display.

Thus, it has become clear that Kelly's career has been lost in a trap of translocation. After all, Kelly was a New Zealander, who relocated to London, had gallery representation in New York, but whose only artworks on view depict America's South. It was this location where Kelly found a terrain to apply his preferred themes of house portraiture, architectural preservation, and nostalgia. His historic, idyllic works suggest the passage of time. The artist's mysterious images of abandoned plantation homes, hazy bayous, banked steamboats, and ferry boats chugging down the Mississippi offer sentimental visions of the region's rich cultural history.

Felix Kelly, ***The Bandstand***, 1976, 22 x 28", Oil on Masonboard, R.W. Norton Art Gallery.



Felix Kelly, ***Mississippi Ghosts***, c. 1978, Oil on Masonboard, R.W. Norton Art Gallery.

Felix Kelly, ***Rosemount, Alabama***, c. 1975, 22 x 28", Oil on Masonboard, R.W. Norton Art Gallery.

Felix Kelly, ***House on a Bluff***, 1978, Oil on Masonboard, R.W. Norton Art Gallery.

Melissa Geiger Ph D. is an Associate Professor of Art History at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania.

Number: Presents *Art of the South 2014*

For the first annual exhibition of *Art of the South*, juror Alice Gray Stites selected 21 works by 18 artists out of submissions by 164 artists. The show was on display at the Fogelman Galleries of Contemporary Art (University of Memphis, TN) from June 27 to August 8, 2014.

Wayne White will be jurying Number: Presents *Art of the South 2015*. The exhibition will be on display at Memphis College of Art's Hyde Gallery from May 20 to July 31. Submissions will be accepted until March 20.

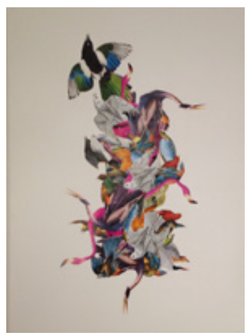
Number: is excited to present this opportunity to showcase recent works by artists of the region.

Tatiana Potts (Maryville, TN), *Every Nook I Go*, Photo Lithograph, 30" x 40"

Megan Hurdle (Memphis, TN), *Brett's away*, mixed media, 35" x 44" x 2"

Jake Weigel (Mississippi State, MS), *Amplituhedron*, Graphite on paper, copper foil, wood, 18" x 24"

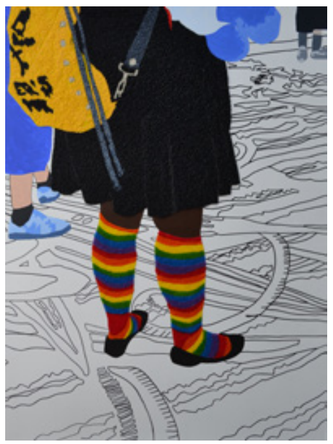
Tore Terrasi (Arlington, TX), *Train Wreck*, Digital Photograph / archival print, 12.5" x 3"



Rachael Grant (Memphis, TN), *Miasma*, collage, 22"x 36"

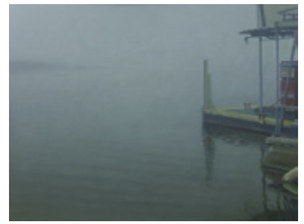
Georgann DeMille (Germantown, TN), *Butterick 6172*, book pages, poultry wire, 36 x 48 x 24

Kyle Holland (Bartlett, TN), *Callow*, Two-plate, color etching: spit bite on spray paint aquatint, line drawing on hardground, 14.75" x 18.25"



Mary Jo Karimnia (Memphis, TN), *Rainbow Pony*, Mixed media with seed beads, 36" x 48"

Jeanne Seagle (Memphis, TN), *Fish Camp Road*, wax pencil on paper, 18" x 48"



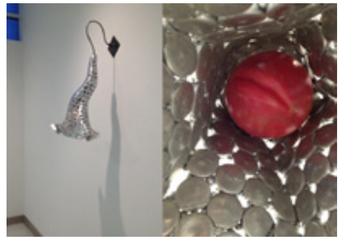
Marc Rouillard (Memphis, TN), *November Morning Fog, McKellar Lake*, oil on linen panel, 24" x 18"

Philip Jackson (Oxford, MS), *Broken*, Oil on panel, 24" x 16" x 2"

Jeanne Seagle (Memphis, TN), *The Guy Wire*, wax pencil on paper, 23" x 49"

Anne Lindberg (Wilmington, NC), *Archive*, Graphite on paper, 74" x 54"

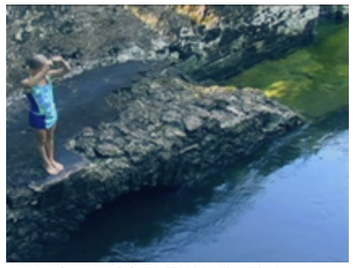
Eszter Sziksz (Memphis, TN), *Fragment*, screen printed papers, 7" x 5"



Joni Younkins-Herzog (Sarasota, FL), *Atropina*, welded aluminum punches, steel, resin, 28" x 18" x 14"

Joshua Brinlee (Memphis, TN), *Siren Song 2*, Digital Collage, 16" x 20"

Janis Brothers (Live Oak, FL), *Floater II (Edition of 10)*, Chromogenic Print on Fuji Archival Paper, 30" x 20"



Janis Brothers (Live Oak, FL), *That Was Then/This Is Now (Edition of 5)*, Two Part Synchronized Video with Sound, (04:37)

Kelly Kristin Jones (Atlanta, GA), *Poncey-Highland*, Atlanta (2014), Archival Pigment Print, 40" x 30"

Kelly Kristin Jones (Atlanta, GA), *Vine City, Atlanta (2014)*, Archival Pigment Print, 40" x 30"

Jason Miller (Germantown, TN), *Self-Fastened to the Duct Tape Cross*, posthumous bee, duct tape sealed within wall case, 8" x 10" x 2"

Contemporary South 2015
Visual Art Exchange, Main Gallery
Raleigh, NC
January 2 – 29, 2015

To attempt to define southern art by one illuminating characteristic would not do justice to the long days of tireless work or the vivid stories that have shaped southern culture and its artists. Deeply rooted in tradition, community, and family ideals, the South is made up of many diverse voices that speak eloquently through art. The *Contemporary South* exhibition at the Visual Art Exchange Main Gallery in Raleigh, North Carolina brought together a thematically colorful collection of works chosen from a wide range of artists telling their own stories — an act in and of itself that preserves this rich culture in a harmonious, holistic way, much like different patches of fabric forming a quilt. Several ideas showed up in these artworks, and they demonstrated that every perspective, every life, every story is valuable and an important addition to the whole.

Chad Alligood, curator at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas, juried the exhibition and clearly wished to capture the many facets of southern art through the variety of works he selected. His previous project, the *State of the Art* exhibition at Crystal Bridges, met a similar goal and highlighted more than 100 artists from hidden corners all across America and their diverse, eclectic works. America as a whole has long prided itself on its "melting pot" of people, but its individual regions make a diverse and definitive impact on the American citizen and especially the American artist. This southern focused exhibit brought together dynamic stories and lives to be learned from, and also instilled a great joy for listening to these stories. Through the variety of works chosen for this exhibition, the artists shared their personal values and connections to culture, but also showed how they have shaped and contributed to the established ideals by learning from others.

No matter the archetypal southern setting, whether a farm of prosperous wheat fields or culturally diverse coastal city, life in this region is deeply rooted in a strong work ethic, self-sufficiency, and dedication to some form of community be it family, church, or workplace. Several works in this exhibition stayed true to this foundation through earthy tones and utilitarian media and subjects. Elle Olivia Andersen's *Farmer Hoffman and Firefly* demonstrated a popular subject in southern culture, the farmer in his rural domain. Featured in her photograph are the farmer's horse and a minimalist foreground that enhances the expanse of field and fog in the background that indicate the breadth of the farmer's work and the elegant simplicity of his slice of culture. Through her choice to capture this image through photography, she takes a piece of one of the most important and widely recognized southern traditions and preserves its authenticity for future generations.

Jaclyn Bowie's *Remiss* pays great attention to detail in its depiction of wood grain, a texture echoing the hard work and solid foundation built by the people of the South. Her piece seeks to recognize the finest details of one of the most common staples of southern culture to emphasize the necessity and beauty of tradition and foundation. Similarly, Paul Collins' *Training My Replacement* uses actual wood panels attached in a stable but haphazard manner to indicate the importance of learning from mentors, but nudges the newer generations to expand on the traditions with their own ideas, as shown by the clever and creative way the wood panels are attached.

A few artists used ropes and chains as media or symbols in their works, such as George Gregory's *Between a Rock and a Hard Place* and Gracelee Lawrence's *Fiera*. Both of these rope sculptures show a balance of functionality and creativity with intricate knots and details. Wes Flanary's *Rusty Chain One* painting shows more wood grain, a padlock, and a chain with many beautiful colors used in the rust. The attention to detail seen in all of the "functional" pieces allows these important materials — wood, ropes, chains, fields — actual recognition of their uses. Often, Americans in our country of progress are caught up in the latest innovations and trends, but this art seeks to preserve the simple tools. These pieces help achieve a southern goal of preserving the foundations and glorifying the simple methods to make a life. They argue that these methods require more labor and dedication, but ultimately shape stronger individuals.

Along with its recognition of the beauty of simple, hard work, this exhibition also brought to light the southern idea that a strong, stable home and reverence of nature's gifts, help shape character and culture. Rachel Campbell's *To Remember We All Have a Story* accomplishes its purpose stated in the title through the simple, clear depiction of a mobile home in its rural setting. At first glance, this painting seems to glorify the home — the details are accurate, the light blue color inviting — but a closer look shows the heaviness of the dark forest background and the equally dark, empty windows. It is hard to interpret these dark tones as threatening or just plain mysterious, but they echo Campbell's title and emphasize that many elements of a person's story stay hidden from the outside. This painting marks the importance of home and life experiences and calls for a universal understanding and acceptance.

Another piece that evokd the value of the southern home is Cary Reeder's *Three O'Clock Shadow*. This monochromatic print of the outer structure of a house shows some common architecture seen in southern homes and also sets the stage for its residents' stories. The light yellow panels against the grey and white tones suggest optimistism for the lives symbolized here. On the other side of that idea, the empty, broken chair in Andrew Regan's *Happy Chair* suggests abandonment and wear. The title invites the viewer to search for the photograph's meaning — is it an ironic title highlighting the dilapidation and emptiness of this sidewalk and building, or is it the truth about the history and life this chair has seen and its influences on those that have sat there? Either way, this piece, like others in this exhibition, encouraged the viewer to search for the story or create a new one. Sterling Stevens' *Unfulfilled* shows a real sense of heartbreak and loss through the abandoned, destroyed kitchen depicted in the photograph. The small pops of color and life, the child's seat pushed away from the table and the patterned tablecloth slipping off, emphasize the struggle and brokenness. Here, the viewer can sympathize with the lack of fulfillment and understand the importance of stability.

Rachel Campbell, *To Remember We All Have a Story*, 2014, 18" x 47", oil on linen. Photo courtesy of the artist.

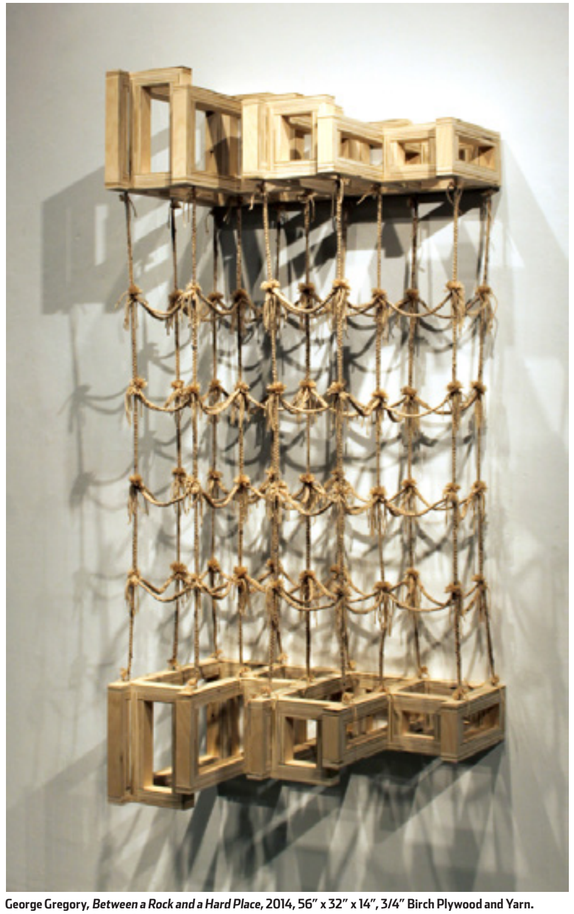
Ironically, the sense of foundation and loyalty southerners feel has at times encouraged them to defend their ideals with violence. The long history of pride and self-sufficiency has taught these people to defend their heritage and treasures by any means necessary. While southerners have revered their soldiers and hunters for years, they have not always recognized when the need for violence has become too strong. The most important examples of this is the violence throughout southern history related to slavery and its abolishment, racism and civil rights. Felice House's *Liakesha Dean* portrays an African-American woman in a common rural "cowgirl" outfit, with a proud stance and firm facial expression. She asserts her identity, crossing cultural and historical lines, and defines the South's pride in creating monumental stories. She also personifies the grit of this region, the daily struggle to reach the reward of establishing ones own foundation and legacy.

Katelyn Chapman painted a different outlook on the daily struggle of the South with *His Fist is Big, But My Gun's Bigger*. This painting portrays a woman sitting on a porch with a shotgun, defending herself and her home, as she waits for her antagonist to show up. This work is a testament to female independence, but the title suggests she has reached this point through suffering and repression. Many women have suffered at the hands of men adhering too strongly to traditions and overly masculine roles displayed through violence. However, this piece shows the strength of women to fight for their rights and success in finding their own voices. These two portraits echo the old traditions to symbolize these values, but other works in the exhibition show the new, free, surreal spirit taking hold as the voice of the southern future.

Eric Saunders' *El Diablo in Durham* captures a graffiti tag on the side of an old building, but instead of giving the piece a feeling of abandonment, the color in the walls, texture of the bricks, and boldness of the tag shows the optimistic statement of identity and fulfillment. Richard Paxson's *Blue Grass* has bright colors and a cubist structure evoking the soul and rhythm of the South, which has collected a variety of musical influences from various parts of the world. While the coastal areas have formed their musical cultures based on travelers and influences from other countries, the inner regions of rural areas and long-established communities boast of their folk music. No matter the area, southerners share a common dedication to the arts for identity and entertainment. This piece, as well as other colorful abstract works such as Martha Thorn's *Black Crescent* and Barbara Campbell Thomas' *Everything Else* show the vibrant nature of southern identity, reference the South's history, and seem to hint at success and strength in the future.

This brilliant collection of art and life shows that no matter the distinct differences in southern voices, the region brings them together in harmony. As shown in this exhibition, the southern future is moving towards recognizing the individual spirit, with less concern for absolute tradition. The old southern tradition will always resound with future generations, but these generations may be able to propel this region into a new stage of growth based on accepting and glorifying individual gifts. A firm foundation has taken many years to build, but those layers of strength will support more growth and change.

Eric Saunders, *El Diablo in Durham*, 2014, 16" x 16", photography. Photo courtesy of the artist.



George Gregory, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, 2014, 56" x 32" x 14", 3/4" Birch Plywood and Yarn. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Rachel Newell enjoys writing about and participating in many forms of visual and performance art.

An American Dream
L. Ross Gallery
Memphis, TN
September 3 - 27, 2014

Memphis's L. Ross Gallery hosted Carl E. Moore's *An American Dream* from September 3 - 27, 2014. The showcase was promoted as "an ongoing body of work that deals with the imbalance in our society" while exploring "how we're affected by social, economic, political, racial, sexual, and historical issues that not only influence the way we think but how we live." Moore's paintings captured mores and paradoxes in American ideologies defining identity, society, and "the pursuit of happiness." In addition, contemporary themes related to lifestyle, politics, violence, law enforcement abuse, and idioms associated with Moore's childhood during Johnson's 1960s Great Society are evident. Moore's art, similar to African American literary artist Langston Hughes, questions the validity of the American Dream as applied to all citizens.

Moore's *American Dream* highlighted the comfortable, controversial, and explosive conditions through which being American must now be defined. The artwork is cloaked in civility, satire, and irony as it addresses critical social concerns such as poverty, homelessness, romance, nationhood, environmentalism, and gender relations. In his painting, *Childhood*, an illustration of a school-aged child, complete with backpack, looks awkwardly upward past the flight of a kite or paper airplane. Reminiscent of a folded three-section angled notepaper airplane that baby boomers might have flown as children, the aircraft spirals in blue sky. Beneath the aircraft, a yellow triangle directly below signals caution as the child gazes left, the plane descends on the right. A plume of black smoke follows the plane; thereby suggesting innocence lost. While the painting's narrative could be mistaken for nostalgia, it is akin to change, tragedy, and mass destruction.

At first glance, Moore's art appears whimsical with a flare of humor, yet beneath the fresco style wood and canvas paintings serious messages are delivered. Some paintings, sectioned in frames or resembling panels found in comic books, illustrate influences of graphic design. Moore's personality is quiet, non-assuming, and non-confrontation. His art assumes a similar guise as it confronts social issues and situations such as the killing of young Black males like Amadou Diallo, a first generation immigrant American mistaken for a serial rapist and shot dead at age 23 in 1999, by three plain clothed police. Long before deaths of Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, and Eric Gardner and dating back to frequent lynchings of slaves, unjustified killing of Black men and women have been subjects in Southern and American life.

The painting *Justified Homicide of Amadou Diallo* resembles a graphic still that might be viewed as an high-action impact comic book illustration complete with rapid action and movement as multiple and varied sized circles representing bullets and blood spatter randomly spot the canvas. Without the title, the narrative is unclear as a gun prominently protrudes from its center just above a lone square black object outlined in red paint and resembling a die in a dice game. On the die's surface, three red drops represent three policemen. While the shape maybe mistaken for a die, it also represents Diallo's wallet mistaken for a gun and used as evidence to justify lethal force. This painting documents an individual historical event; places Diallo's death strategically on a timeline highlighting the deaths of multiple young African Diaspora men; and continues longstanding dialogues about deaths of unarmed ethnic youth while simultaneously indicting judicial systems and law enforcement for gambling with the lives of American citizens.

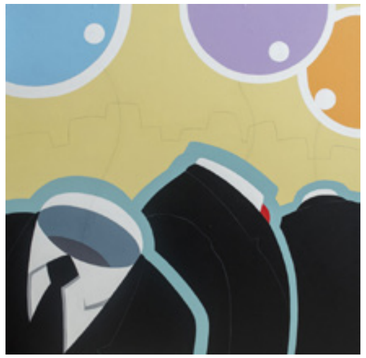
American Dream opened with *I am Man* depicting a square shaped boxed robot-like figure pointing to a flag on his uniform's left shoulder. The "I Am Man" slogan was coined in the 1960s by striking Black garbage collectors protesting unfair treatment in work conditions, and gained significance as a mantra during the Civil Rights Movement. The box figure appears unsure in his role as man and activist, and further appears agitated that a label is required to define his humanity. Moore's use of square shapes for his characters are rare, most humans are painted through curvy shapes. In comparison, other male characters in Moore's art appear pensive and self-assured, but non-confrontational. The square body suggests that this character is at the beginning of transformation and coming into self-awareness and identity. In contrast, *Black Man Gaze*, shows a male persona that is more fluid and human-like. He too wears a uniform with a flag as a shoulder patch. His features and posture are better defined and display confidence.

In *Political Party*, Moore painted three characters in black suits and ties to represent three political systems: Democratic, Republican, and Independent. Above each suit is a detached and floating pastel colored round head. The suits are positioned in front, side, and back profiles. In this painting, Moore's use of circular shapes serves multiple purposes: the first to suggest air balloons at political celebrations; the second to suggest airhead politicos; and the third to express caution at accepting exploitative ideologies. He cautions individuals against party-line doctrines containing divisive triggers.

Included in the showcase were five interpretative paintings of the American flag. Moore's interpretation differs from those of Jasper Johns' American flags. He names the first paintings simply *The American Flag* with bright cherry red strips and a pale or federal blue background to surround white stars. Four other flag paintings were dubbed *Analogy of American History & Heritage 1 – 4* showing fifty stars and thirteen stripes. However, Moore paints over some stars to match the color of his stripes and leaves others white. Moore's flag series stimulates thought about shifting ethnic and racial population centers, especially throughout the South and West. The artist clearly intends to introduce ethnicity and race as a discourse stemming from his art, but leaves enough space for the viewer to interpret his flag series.

American Dream highlights multiple aspects of American and southern lifestyles and politics, Moore's art seeks to raise awareness without preaching. Rather he illustrates questions: Does it fester and sores /then runs? Or perhaps exists like a syrupy sweet? Based on their own notions, Moore's viewers get to decide.

Carl E. Moore, *Her Vision of Man, Her Vision of Man*, acrylic on wood panel, 24" x 24"



Carl E. Moore, *Political Party, Political Party*, acrylic on wood panel, 24" x 24"

Carl E. Moore, *Childhood, Childhood*, acrylic on wood panel, 24" x 24"

Keith D. Lee is an independent researcher and nonprofit arts management consultant.

Vesna Pavlović
Intersections: Illuminated Archive
The Phillips Collection
1600 21st Street, NW
Washington DC
May 22 - September 28, 2014

The Latin dictum *multum in parvo* –"much in little" — might serve as subtitle of Tennessee artist Vesna Pavlović's installation at Washington DC's Phillips Collection. Situated in the Sant Building stairwell, the exhibition features digitally manipulated images made by the artist from negatives stored in the institution's archives related to shows mounted in the museum during the 1960s. Pavlović unifies the space with a 35-feet long curtain of translucent cloth also printed with images from the museum's past. Though deliberately restricted in scope, the installation offers a great deal to consider: the extended role of photography, here seen in a spatial, almost sculptural context, together with the zeitgeist of the 60s and the museum's historical penchant for Modernism. Yet overarching these focal concerns is the invitation to ponder the role of memory, both personal and corporate.

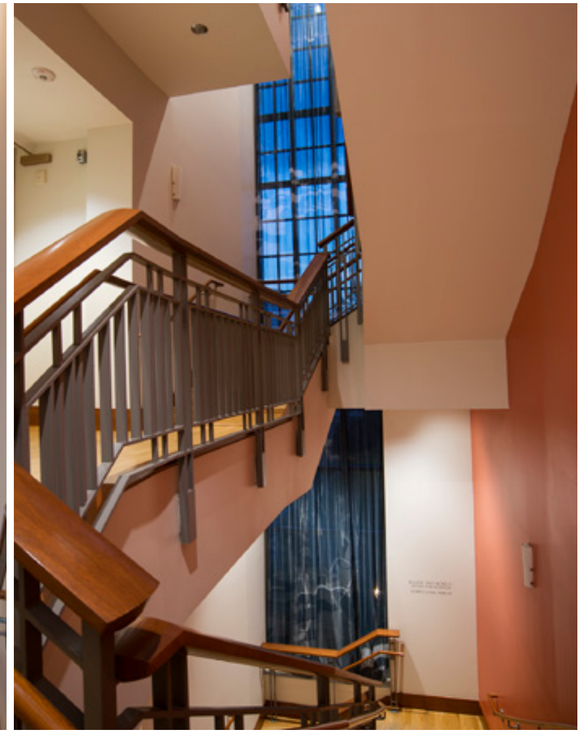
Encapsulating the Phillip collection's architectural history, Pavlović's ink-jet print of the museum's facade (*Untitled [Annex,1960 Box 4, folder 33]*), 2014, greets the viewer in the stairwell's ground floor. On the left stands the elegant 1897 Georgian Revival mansion, family home of Duncan Phillips, who in 1921 began displaying his art collection in a room over the north wing. Connected to the house by a glass bridge is the Goh Annex on the right, the understated stone-faced addition of 1960. Accentuating the structure's Modernist cadence, a stone relief of a stylized bird patterned after Georges Braque's celebrated painting in the collection hovers over the entrance. Further dating the photograph is the rather shabby Beetle on the left and the now-vintage station wagon on the right. No longer Modernist, however, the annex was reconfigured in what some term a Post-Modernist manner in 2006, when the Sant Wing was added, its stone facade replaced by brick to complement the century-old apartment building gutted before conversion into additional museum spaces.

Though Pavlović chose them primarily for their graphic design reflecting a 60s esthetic, the other reprinted images on display also recall the decade's emotional and artistic climate as seen in sculpture and in painting. Superimposing two negatives, *Untitled (Annex, David Smith exhibition, 1962.2)*, 2014, brings to mind the Surrealist playfulness derived from Pablo Picasso, seen in Smith's early welded metal works. In *Untitled (Mark Tobey exhibition, 1962.3)*, 2014, Pavlović effects what she terms a "pointillization," updating, if you will, the mystical harmonies of Tobey's "white writing" into something akin to a computer's pixels. The last print, *Untitled (Swiss Peasant art exhibition, 1957.4)*, 2014, embodies a wry comment on the function of the archive itself: a protective sheet of plastic meant to protect a photographic negative has melted creating arresting web-like patterns.

Inspired by the Modernist bias for curtains, Pavlović's dramatic hanging over the stairwell's three-storied window brings the installation together *(Untitled [Annex, Giacometti exhibition, 1962, Box 4, Folder 34])*, 2014. Its soft folds interrupt, though agreeably so, the images printed on it — above, several of Alberto Giacometti's celebrated chariots, together with his well-known attenuated figures, whose roughened, craggy surfaces ally him to Post-War Existentialism, and below, Harlequin patterns from the entrance floor of the Goh annex. Not only does the curtain soften the incoming light but it also invites veiled views of the sculpture courtyard outside, serving as transition between inside and out.

Manipulating archival images from the 60s, Pavlović offers intriguing glimpses into this decade, its design bias and its esthetic climate. But at the same time she creates a mini-history of the Phillips Collection itself, especially its architectural renovations — from Georgian Revival, to Modernist, to Post-Modernist. These considerations, moreover, lead the viewer to reflect on the role of memory itself, often sparked — as Marcel Proust has shown–by fragmentary sensations, each fragment conjuring up a whole.

***Illuminated Archive*, Installation shot. Photo by Lee Stalsworth.**



***Illuminated Archive*, Installation shot. Photo by Lee Stalsworth.**

Dorothy Joiner is the Lovick P. Corn Professor of art history at LaGrange College, Lagrange GA.

Lazy Susan
Curated by April Bachtel
17th Street Studios
Knoxville, TN
November 21, 2014

A children's Bible study room was transformed into a contemporary art space for *Lazy Susan*, a one-night show curated by April Bachtel. Located adjacent to 17th Street Studios in Redeemer Church of Knoxville, the off-temperature dome lights remained as the only hint of the room's normal use. Natalie Petrosky's *Black Stripe Fringe White* set the stage. Composed of stacked floor mats painted stiff with black and white acrylic paint, the floor piece created a kind of moonscape, which changed phase and set as I walked around its perimeter.

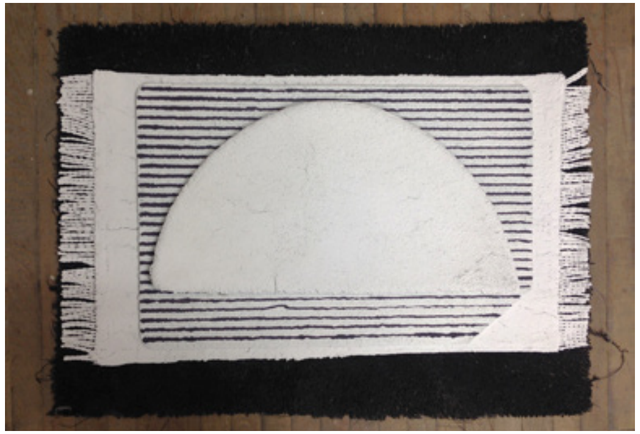
Turning to my right, Emma Pavlik's *Fetish*, an artwork made of thirteen small drawings tacked to the wall, came into view. Image transfers of potted plants served as a visual dictionary for the grouping. While each of these drawings had a nice material gesture, many of them seemed superfluous and served to house quite a bit of unintentionality. Thomas Warton's *Off* continued in this trend, managing to not quite be anything despite its grand, gestural signature and brute physicality.

Next came Jing Qin's *Immense House*, a small acrylic painting on wood panel that leaned against the wall by resting on two nails, creating a small shelter. Along with the scale of the piece, this shelter created a poetic dynamism that helped to overturn the easily digested house-symbol. Directly behind this painting rested Victoria Buck's *untitled*. Tiny porcelain ladders balance atop a miniature soccer board in this small, stilted sculpture. On first glance the porcelain reads as shiny white tape, similar to the kind used to make the goal lines on the soccer field. This play on materials is quite charming, a word I would use to describe the piece overall.

Returning to the wall, I am greeted by Martin Lang's *The Next Text Painting*, an artwork that cannot get over it's own cleverness. The image references an iPhone text bubble, with the words "The next text painting – martin" revealed against a field of straight-from-the-tube blue. The color choice along with the generic size and dimensions of the painting seem to point at a disregard for the materials, an idea that is quickly belayed by the fumbling, laborious manner in which the paint is applied.

Eleanor Aldrich's *Paste Eyes* rounds out the exhibition. Jewel-like eyes stare out from a face that is somehow digital, perhaps from the pixilation generated by the application of mesh to paint. Upon closer examination, the eyes shift from eyes to earrings to fish. The overall effect was of a mermaid show in Florida, the flashy physicality gaudy but loveable.

Overall, *Lazy Susan* has parts of lazy and less of Susan. The exhibition endeavors to complete itself with curatorial explanation, brushing off missing links between formal and conceptual issues with phrases like "oscillates and toggles" and "[it] says more than the words that can be read." Meaning, if you do not see this, it is because it is also that. If you do not see everything, it is because it is also nothing. This on and off black and white game is fun to play, but ultimately leads nowhere. The curatorial statement becomes the "routine dismissal" it is so interested in guarding against. That being said, Bachtel does shine when she describes "playful anxiety" as a defining moment in *Lazy Susan*. While I generally identify this type of anxiety as a means to an end, in this exhibition it becomes the means and the end, the trees and the forest. Serious criticism aside, I left the show thoroughly charmed and am excited to see additional works by the included artists.



Natalie Petrosky, *Black Stripe Fringe White*, 2014, floor mats and acrylic paint. Photo by Jessica Lund.

Elanor Aldrich, *Paste Eyes*, 2014, silicone, metallic paper, screen and oil on canvas. Photo by Jessica Lund.

Virginia Buck, *untitled*, 2014, porcelain and found object. Photo by Jessica Lund.

 Jessica Lund is an artist based in Mascot, TN.

First Person
Fort Houston
Nashville, TN
October 4 – 31, 2014

Television screens line the walls, forming a semi circle of sound and shifting images. In each video the artist is not only present, but also the primary character. The videos mutter aloud, talk over one another, or emit understated looping sounds. One gets the feeling that one is a guest at a table of self-indulgent speakers. Maybe it's a debate or a conversation over a meal. It's difficult to say whether they are speaking in conversation or competition. Do they care to share in an exchange, or is it their intent simply to declare themselves? If their words are meant for each other, then their message is falling on deaf ears.

This is somewhat at odds with our understanding of the format of television. It's a platter of information for the viewer to consume. We instinctively know that the message is for us. If this is so, the next question must be am I listening — *really listening*? Am I capable of the comprehension that is being asked of me, or am I just another noisemaker in the cacophony of self-proclamation?

The presence of this paradox begets the question: is translation possible? Even Hennesee Youngman (Jason Musson), who pontificates sarcastically and educationally about the sublime, seems to have more questions than conclusions. We are won over by dry humor and somber foolishness. There is a low-fi, backyard aesthetic common to each video that feels familiar to anyone with a YouTube account. Some of them even draw a direct reference to the style and format of the YouTube video blog. This is the work of common people, anyone's videos. One comes to feel like a willing participant in a series of meditations about the meaning of sincerity, and whether or not it is ever possible to communicate one's truth.

Should familiarity and accessibility be enough to win our trust? Television is a medium with dubious credibility. On one hand it remains a primary news source and a means of capturing and conveying evidence. On the other hand it is the home of fictionalized visuals all the way from blockbusters to soap operas. The phenomenon of the Internet persona, to which everyone with a web-based "profile" can lay claim, is an edited and publicized version of the truth of one's self. It's not always a lie, but seldom the truth. This confused relationship with sincerity is coupled with scale: the Internet persona is broadcasted far and wide. Although one feels close to the subjects of the video — this could be the living room of a friend, the wooded backyard of a neighbor — it is a struggle to remember we are not the recipients of an intimate confession, we are the audience of a far-reaching transmission. We are one of thousands.

The show title *First Person* suggests a singular narrative, told from an isolated first-hand perspective. I tells the story, repeatedly stating selfhood, taking ownership of thoughts and actions. In *One Week Walden*, Jennifer Sullivan narrates in diary form her misguided and bumbling search for self in an attempted connection with nature. Siobhan Landry delineates the death and burial of identical family golden retrievers in her video *Little Tins*. Though her tone is matter-of-fact, explaining death as in a confessional or a conversation with a child, we get the feeling that Siobhan is peeling at the corners of a façade.

Other videos seem more interested in complicating the first hand format. Traci Tullius receives repeated blows to the face as various objects are flung at her from off camera, provoking a rhythmic staccato response of empathy and mockery from the viewer. We are the perpetrator and also one with the victim. Artist William Lamson features his own face as the center point, although his identity is obscured by a mask of banana's, each with it's own fuse which he methodically lights and which rhythmically explode. These videos center on an act of self-inflicted struggle. We cringe or we laugh. Empathy takes over and we are fused momentarily with the artist.

First Person is not a statement on the good versus evil of the internet. It pushes us neither to accept nor reject the evolution of the information age. Instead it sits in the center of an experience, asking questions about the truth of identity, human capability, and whether or not it is truly possible to translate one's truth.

Siobhan Landry, *Little Tins*, 2013, 5x7, 300 ppi, still from video, www.bigredandshiny.com

Traci Tullius, *Some People Never Learn*, 2001, 5x7, 300 ppi, still from video, www.tracitullius.com

Evelyn Walker is an artist, thinker, and writer, treating each practice as indiscernible from one another.

Regional Update: Mississippi

The **Mississippi Museum of Art** is hosting three noteworthy exhibitions. *Civil War Drawings from the Becker Collection* is the first opportunity for many to see works only recently documented as those of Joseph Becker and his fellow artists who were employed by *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* in the 19th Century. Many of these previously unpublished drawings illustrate American life during the time of the Civil War. From quick gestural studies to highly refined works these drawings include scenes of war and the natural beauty and serenity of southern life. The drawings capture a true sense of life during this period in American history and remind the viewer of the skill and nerve of the artists to create these works during such chaos. This show will appeal to all ages and I highly recommend checking it out. The exhibition is on display from January 31 – April 19, 2015.

The Welty Biennial will be on display from April 10 – July 3, 2015 at the Mississippi Museum of Art and celebrates Eudora Welty as a visionary American: author, photographer, witness and reporter of the state of Mississippi to the world. For 12 weeks, the first *Welty Biennial* will circle out from the Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson, where Miss Welty was born, grew up as a child, and made her home. Related exhibits of photography, sculptures, quilts, video, live performance, film, live music and dance will take place throughout Jackson. This citywide exhibit rally's around the iconic Southern figure in a way that demonstrates the love and respect Mississippians have for Eudora Welty and I strongly suggest taking part in the festivities.

Also at the MS Museum of Art from May 29-September 6, 2015, is an exhibition by George Wardlaw titled *A Life in Art: Works from 1954 to 2014*. Raised on a farm in northeastern Mississippi during the years of the Great Depression, George Wardlaw emerged from humble beginnings to become an artist—at Ole Miss—and a member of the avant-garde scene in New York City during the 1950s and '60s. The thirty-four works of art on display show the very best of what Wardlaw has to offer and illustrate why he became such an influential artist over his six-decade art career.

The **University of Mississippi's Museum** is currently highlighting two special exhibits this spring. The first exhibit, *Brief Encounters* by Martin Arnold, is on display in the Lower Skipwith Gallery from March 10- May 16, 2015. The figure painter is originally from Michigan, but has lived in Mississippi for the past eight years. His almost life-size oil paintings explore the silent, subliminal exchange of awareness as the subject and viewer confront each other in an attempt to "produce artwork that assumes the role of a psychological mirror." Personally, I am very excited about this exhibit — artwork that digs into undiscovered areas of the human psyche have always interested me and I am looking forward to Arnold's interpretation and experiencing the work.

The second exhibit, *Our Faith Affirmed – Works from the Gordon W. Bailey Collection* is on display through August 1, 2015. The exhibition consists of artworks created by African-American self-taught artists from the South featuring works by 27 artists, all born between 1900 and 1959. At times the work seems crude and almost childish, but when viewed in context it is hard to not be affected by the work. There is real power in this exhibition despite the artists' lack of training and education in art. The drawings and paintings are not only a visual record describing a specific culture, but also an emotional journey that reminds the viewer about the potential art holds to create a shared language that can still be spoken nearly a century later. Anyone interested in race-based inequalities and the power of the human spirit to overcome great adversity will truly enjoy this exhibition. I recommend this exhibit for people of all ages.

Michael Stanley is currently an Assistant Professor of Art at Delta State University.

Charles E.H. Bonwill, *Wreck of the Confederate Gun Boat Cotton at Bayou Teche, Louisiana*, 1863, graphite on wove paper.

Regional Update: Northwest & Central Arkansas

Your regional updater is probably jumping the gun on this one, but I'm so excited that here it is now: the **Arkansas Arts Center** is hosting *30 Americans* this spring! The show of works by major African-American artists of the past 40 years was first exhibited at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh in 2011 and has been at numerous museums and art centers since then. The works are from the Rubell Family Collection, one of the world's largest private contemporary art collections. These are big-name artists — Jean-Michel Basquiat, Kara Walker, Nick Cave, Carrie Mae Weems, and a lot more — and the work is coming here to Arkansas. The exhibit will run from April 10, 2015 through June 21, 2015.

Another interesting show in Little Rock is *The Penland Experience* at **UALR Gallery 1**, that ran from January 15, 2105 through March 6 2015 and was curated by gallery director Brad Cushman and Nathan Larson. The exhibition features work made by students, resident artists and teachers from **The Penland School of Crafts**, an important center of American craft art in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. The art objects in the show come from the UALR permanent collection and from local collections and included work by local artists, like Delita Martin and Robyn Horn, who have been associated in one way or another the The Penland School.

There is nothing particularly exciting going on at **Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art**, now that their blockbuster show *State of the Art* is coming down. The next big special exhibit is *Van Gogh to Rothko: Masterworks from the Albright-Knox Gallery*, the latest in what is starting to seem like a series of exhibitions of not-necessarily-American modernist paintings from famous collections (see *The Artists' Eye: Georgia O'Keeffe and the Alfred Stieglitz Collection*, 2013 and *The William S. Paley Collection: A Taste for Modernism*, 2013-2014.) The show starts on February 21, 2015. The other noteworthy thing, which you have probably read about elsewhere, is that Don Bacigalupi, the President of Crystal Bridges who initiated and co-curated *State of the Art* has, as of January 15 of this year, left Bentonville to become the Founding President of The Lucas Museum of Narrative Art in Chicago.

From some smaller venues, **Good Weather Gallery** in North Little Rock continues to show new work by young artists from all over the United States on a mostly monthly basis. Currently there is a fascinating show of work by Terry James Conrad called *rocks, boxes, and dirt*. The installation is based on Conrad's unusual, idiosyncratic printing processes. For viewing information, check the website www.goodweathergallery.com. I've just found out about a fun-sounding project of the **Thea Foundation**, also in North Little Rock. It's called *The Art Department*; it's a quarterly exhibition series directed towards "young professionals" that features prominent Arkansas artists. The next event will show painter Guy Bell. More information can be found at www.theasartdepartment.com.

Finally, in the capital improvements division, the art departments at **University of Arkansas at Fayetteville**, and the **University of Arkansas at Fort Smith** are involved in major expansions of their facilities. Fayetteville is building (renovating) a two-level, 33,000 square foot workshop, classroom and studio area near the city's trail system. It sounds wonderful – huge spaces, a working foundry, and accessible by bicycle. At Fort Smith a new art department building is already under construction, and will be open for use by fall semester, 2015. Both projects are responses to increased numbers of students, and the growing vibrancy of both of these departments.

Sarah Leflar is an artist working in Fayetteville, AR.

Rashid Johnson, *The New Negro Escapist Social and Athletic Club (Thurgood)*, 2008, Lambda print, Ed. 2/5, 69 x 55 1/2 inches.

Support those who Support the Arts:

Listings for Artists, Galleries, Organizations, and Businesses that Make Art Happen

Clarksville, TN

Watagua Arts Academy
Austin Peay State University
Clarksville, TN 37044
931.221.7876
www.aspu.edu/watagua

Johnson City, TN

Slocumb Galleries
East Tennessee State University
www.etsu.edu/cas/art/slocumb

Denise Stewart-Sanabria
http://www.stewart-sanabria.com

Memphis, TN

Art Center
1636 Union Avenue
901.276.6321
www.artcentermemphis.com

Art Museum of the University of Memphis
Communications and Fine Arts Bldg.
901.678.2224
www.amum.org

Beauty Shop Restaurant
966 South Cooper
Memphis, TN 38104
901.272.7111
http://thebeautyshoprestaurant.com

BluesWax
info@blueswax.org
norman@normalsasskel.com

Caritas Village
2509 Harvard Avenue
Memphis, TN 38112
901.327.5246
http://www.caritasvillage.org

Crosstown Arts
422-438 N. Cleveland
Memphis, TN 38104
Tuesday-Saturday, 10 am - 6 pm
901.507.8030
http://crosstownarts.org

Tim Crowder
http://timcrowderartblog.blogspot.com

David Lusk Gallery
4540 Poplar Avenue
Memphis, TN 38117
901.767.3800
www.davidluskgallery.com

Ijm studios
lester julian merriweather
theartist_ljulian@hotmail.com

Memphis Brooks Museum of Art
1934 Poplar Avenue
901.544.6226
www.brooksmuseum.org

Memphis College of Art
1930 Poplar Avenue
901.272.5100
www.mca.edu

Main Gallery, Rust Hall at Memphis College of Art
Gallery hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am to 5pm,
Saturday 9am to 4pm and Sunday 12 to 4 pm.

Hyde Gallery at Memphis College of Art
Nesin Graduate School
477 South Main
Gallery Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 12-5pm
477 Store
Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 12-5pm

Memphis Flyer
www.MemphisFlyer.com

National Ornamental Metal Museum
374 Metal Museum Drive
Memphis, TN 38106
901.774.6380
metalmuseum.org

Rhodes College
Clough-Hanson Gallery
2200 North Parkway
901.843.3442

University of Memphis
Jones Hall Gallery, Department of Art
901.678.2925

Nashville, TN

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Nashville, TN 37206
615.438.6852
info@chicNhair.com
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615.477.1567
bethseiters@gmail.com
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David Lusk Gallery
516 Hagan Street
Nashville, TN 37203
615.780.9990
www.davidluskgallery.com

Emily Harper Beard
www.eflharper.com
efhbeard@gmail.com

Frist Center for the Visual Arts
919 Broadway-Downtown
Nashville, TN 37203
615.244.3340
FAX 615.744.3991
www.fristcenter.org

gallery F. @ Scarritt-Bennett Center
1008 19th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37212
615.340.7501
www.scarrittbennett.org

LeQuire Gallery
4304 Charlotte Avenue
615.298.4611
www.lequiregallery.com
Tue-Sat10-3

Adrienne Outlaw
http://adrienneoutlaw.com

The Parthenon
2500 West End Avenue
Nashville, TN 37203
615.862.8431

Seed Space
1201 4th Avenue South
http://seedspace.org

Tennessee Arts Commission
401 Charlotte Avenue
615.741.1701
www.arts.state.tn.us

Tinney Contemporary
237 5th Avenue North
Nashville, TN 37219
615.255.7816
www.tinneycontemporary.com

Zeitgeist Gallery
1819 21st Avenue South
Nashville, Tennessee 37212
Phone: 615.256.4805
www.zeitgeist-art.com
Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-5pm

Batesville, AR

Batesville Area Arts Council
246 E. Main Street
Batesville, AR 72503
www.batesvilleareaartscouncil.org

Fayetteville, AR

The Depot
548 W Dickson Street
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479)443-9900
http://arsagasdepot.com/

University of Arkansas
The Fine Arts Center Gallery
116 Fine Arts Center
Fayetteville, AR 72701
479.575.7987 | art.urak.edu/fineartsgallery
Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sunday 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Walton Arts Center
495 W Dickson Street
Fayetteville, AR 72701
Hours: Monday - Friday 9am-6pm;
Saturday Noon to 4pm
479.443.5600 | waltonartscenter.org

Little Rock, AR

Arkansas Arts Center
9th & Commerce / MacArthur Park
Little Rock, AR 72203
501.372.4000
www.arkarts.com

Greg Thompson Fine Art
429 Main Street
North Little Rock, AR 72114
501.920.2778 (c)
501.664.2787 (w)
www.GregThompsonFineArt.com

No. Little Rock, AR

Argenta Arts Foundation
Argenta Downtown Council
501.517.3127
www.argentaartsdistrict.org

Thea Foundation
401 Main Street #100
North Little Rock, AR 72114
501.379.9512
theafoundation.org

Jonesboro, AR

Arkansas State University
Bradbury Gallery
201 Olympic Drive
Jonesboro, Arkansas
870.972.2567
www.bradburygallery.astate.edu
dnspe@astate.edu

Piggott, AR

Hemingway-Pfeiffer Museum & Education Center
1021 West Cherry Street
870.598.3487
http://hemingway.astate.edu

Cleveland, MS

Delta State University
Wright Art Center Gallery
1003 W. Sunflower Rd.
662.846.4720
www.dsuart.com

Delta Arts Alliance
www.deltaartsalliance.com
daa.exhibits@hotmail.com

Studio 230
110 B South Court Street
Cleveland, MS 38723
Wednesday-Friday & Sunday, 1pm-6pm
Saturday 9am-7pm
www.studio230ms.com

Oxford, MS

The University of Mississippi
Department of Art
Meek Hall , Gallery 130
662.915.7193
art.olemiss.edu

Starkville, MS

Mississippi State University
102 Freeman Hall,
Mississippi State, MS 39762
662.325.2970
aad.msstate.edu Fayetteville, AR

Bottle Rocket Gallery
1495 S. Finger Rd.
bottlerocketgallery@gmail.com
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Number: Presents

Art of the South 2015

Call for Entries

Wayne White
JUROR

Number: Inc is pleased to announce the second annual *Art of the South* exhibition, open to all artists 18 and older working in any media residing in AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MA, MO, MS, NC, OK, TN, TX, SC, VA, or WV.

Deadline: March 20, 2015
Entry fee: $30 (up to three entries)
Submissions: numberinc.org/art-of-the-south

Juror: Wayne White
Multi-media artist, director, designer, and Tennessean Wayne White creates compulsively, using whatever materials are at hand. Humourous, smart, and scrappy, his body of work was chronicled in the 2012 film *Beauty is Embarrassing* by filmmaker Neil Berkeley. This documentary spotlights a journey through television (*Pee-wee's Playhouse*), to music videos (Smashing Pumpkins' "Tonight, Tonight"), to the text-altered thrift store landscape paintings that brought the artist fast-acting art world acclaim.

March 20	Entries due
April 10	Selection notifications sent via email
April 11 – May 14	Delivery window for art shipment to MCA
May 13 & 14	Drop off days for art hand delivered, 9 am – 4 pm
May 20	Exhibition opens to public
May 29	Opening Reception, 6 – 9 pm (Trolley Night)
July 31	Last day to view exhibition
August 1-2	Pickup/Scheduled shipment of work back to artist

Submission Guidelines: All entries must be submitted online. Entries must be original work created within the last 2 years. Work must weigh less than 60 lbs and measure no larger than 72" in any direction. Work must be available for the duration of the exhibition.

Delivery Guidelines: Loan agreement must be signed and returned before work is shipped or delivered. Work must arrive to Hyde Gallery at Memphis College of Art by May 14, 2015 exhibition-ready, complete with hanging wire (no saw-tooth hangers or clip frames). Work that differs significantly from the entry may be disqualified. Work to be shipped to or hand delivered.

Shipped works must use plexi or acrylic, no glass. Work must use a reusable container and be accompanied by a prepaid return shipping label. Work will be repackaged and shipped back to the artist at the close of the exhibition. Hand delivered works not picked up by August 2, 2015 will become the property of Number Inc.

Insurance: All art works will be insured while on gallery premises. Insurance does not cover damage caused during shipping due to any reason. Please insure your work during transit.

Sale of Artwork: Artists have the option to have artworks for sale during the exhibition for a commission of 30% on all artwork sold.

Publicity: Number: Inc. and the Memphis College of Art may use images of art work accepted into the exhibition for publicity purposes. Artists agree to allow reproduction of digital files and or photographs taken of art for educational, publicity and archival purposes.

INFO & SUBMIT: ***NUMBERINC.ORG/art-of-the-south***

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