

JULY 15, 2010
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REFLECTING AND COLLECTING

1708 Gallery's Satellite exhibition inspired by VMFA opening
on view through Saturday, August 28



Reflecting and Collecting, the current exhibition at 1708 Gallery's satellite, Linden Row Inn, is a celebration of the grand opening of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the role its art collection can play as a muse in the creative process. Artists who have lived or worked in Virginia were asked to contribute works inspired by a piece from the permanent collection of the VMFA. Many of the artists featured in the exhibition are VMFA fellows or have exhibited or taught at the Museum. Curated by Richmond artist and 1708 board member Amie Oliver, *Reflecting and Collecting* is on view through the 25th of August. The proceeds from all art sales benefit the artist and the exhibition programs of 1708 Gallery.

Reflecting and Collecting features new works by Ruth Bolduan, Sally Bowring, David Choi, Sonya Clark, Don Crow, Diana Detamore, Aimee Joyaux, Andrew Kozlowski, Karen Kincaid, Michael Lease, Lauri Luck, Jeff Majer, Amie Oliver, Craig Pleasants, Charles Ponticello, Jon-Phillip Sheridan, Javier Tapia, Kendra Wadsworth, and Aggie Zed.



Ruth Bolduan's painting is titled *Wootton's Horse* in honor of John Wootton's "A Bay Horse Got By the Leeds Arabian," of 1715. Not only is she drawn to eighteenth century art because of the sociological ideals they embody, but also because "John Wootton's magnificent painting of a horse and groom in the landscape reminds me of why I make paintings."

Sally Bowring's *Green Garden* adopts the ordered structure of the garden plan. "This semi-grid structure has always intrigued her," in it she has "found an ordered format to hold her chaos." It is inspired by the "Egyptian Garden" from the VMFA's ancient collection.

David Choi drew inspiration from "Portrait of Mrs. French's White Lap Dog" by George Stubbs and created a piece entitled *Miss French's Lapdog* which "emphasizes the importance of play and the freeness of frivolity."

Combining traditional African American hairstyling techniques and imagery of the Confederate and American flags, **Sonya Clark** created a piece in which "complicated histories coincide. As one of very few American painters in the time period to depict this complicated history," Eastman Johnson and his piece "A Ride for Liberty- The Fugitive Slaves," from 1862 inspired Clark to create this piece.

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A repeated pattern of colored triangles creates a rigid geometric structure in **Don Crow's** *Untitled* collage. He references Sol LeWitt's "Wall Drawing #541" as his source of inspiration for the "directness of the imagery, the lack of artifice and the sentiment that the - merely visual- is enough to create a significant aesthetic experience."

Diana Detamore's painting *Muse 2010* is inspired by and recreates an image of an ancient Cycladic fertility symbol that is "evocative of the power of the feminine, the wisdom and mystery of the universe's cyclical regeneration."

Inspired by the formal elements of African art, **Aimee Joyaux** selected the 19-20th century Yoruba culture "Beaded Crown" as a source of inspiration for her pieces *St. Lucy* and *St. Benedict the Black*. Her "totems are an attempt to embody these influences by creating objects of enough grandeur to wear one of those Yoruba beaded crowns".

Andrew Kozlowski recognizes the art of the periphery in his untitled piece inspired by "Soup Tureen, Cover and Liner," 1736 from the English Silver Collection by Paul de Lamerie. His piece features a mass of kitchen-ware falling across the canvas, "a collapse forcing their owners and commissioners to part ways prematurely due to an unexpected exchange of currency or power." They represent objects that "are stolen, surrendered, plundered, left behind, buried, and occasionally melted down, but never are they discarded."

Severin Roesen's painting, "The Abundance of Nature" inspired **Karen Kincaid's** *Untitled Plants from the Garden of Earthly Delights*, because "the lushness of the subject material as well as the application of the paint look surreal." Like Roesen, Kincaid presents a striking arrangement filled with color and texture.



Inspired by "Funerary Image of Woman" from the late 200s to early 300s CE and "Mazeppa Held by a Jockey," **Michael Lease** created a series of prints made by enlarging newspaper clippings of obituary photographs. His work "affords the uncommon and unlikely opportunity to look into the eyes of these strangers and wonder in which ways we are the same."

Shocked by the "languorous and depressed repose" of the women in Artemisia Gentileschi's "Venus and Cupid" and Edouard Vuillard's "The Golden Chair" **Lauri Luck** reinterprets these images adding a sense of humor and light-heartedness in her drawings *Venus Waits* and *She Waits*.

Donald Sultan's "Lemons May 16 1984" inspired **Jeff Majer** to paint *Fruit or VMFA Memories*. Majer painted his work while remembering the elements of Sultan's work that influenced him. He tried to "take some things from it and toss away those things that were not [him]."

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“The power of symbols, objects and a vocabulary of human form are the language of the dialogue” used by **Amie Oliver** in her *Dharma Diary Series*. Pieces from this series were inspired by the Tibetan “Wheel of Life” from the late 18th-early 19th century and the Tibetan “Sacred Diagram of the Universe” (Mandala of Hevajra) from 1400-1600 CE, because they too use imagery and symbols to send “a timeless message conveyed using universal form.”

Inspired by the works “Family Portrait” by Robert Gwathmey and “Meritatio” by Brice Marden, as well as his own experience in sculpture and alternative housing construction, **Craig Pleasants** created *Octagonal Living Unit 2.0*. The work that he shows here is “a miniature version of that piece inspired by the multiple crises in housing that have recently occurred in Haiti, Chile, and China. This unit, which can be assembled in a few hours, benefits from being still quite useful years on, unlike much emergency or transitional housing. For about \$50,000, it is possible to manufacture, crate, and ship ten of these units, (complete with roof) to Port au Prince.” This would be a wonderful opportunity for a collector to own the original, painted prototype in addition to providing homes for 10 Haitian families in a time of need. At its core, the piece and its sources of inspiration coalesce around the German concept of “heimat,” which Joel Agee describes as “the welcoming warmth and sheltering intimacy of an origin to which one can return...the place where one feels at home, and that home need not have political or even physical boundaries.”



Charles Ponticello's sculptural piece pays homage to John Cage. Although Cage is best known for his piano pieces, the “New River Series” inspired Ponticello, because “Cage’s Ebb and Flow, his existential meander throughout life is perfectly summed up in these paintings.” As John Cage used unusual materials and methods of application in his New River paintings, Ponticello’s *Whirling Krestle* is made from readily-available and somewhat unorthodox materials.

Residual # 10, Winter, is part of **Jon-Phillip Sheridan's** “accumulation of visual impressions that articulates traces of human interactions with their surroundings.” Like the piece that inspired it, “Four Panels: Green Black Red Blue,” by Ellsworth Kelly, it explores how we perceive and define space.



Javier Tapia chose the work of Giorgio Morandi as his inspiration for the piece, *Reaction to Morandi*. For Javier, Morandi’s bottles “evoke a sense of ‘is’...they seem to be bottles you can’t take apart...maybe expressing the things we can’t change of ourselves.”

Kendra Wadsworth's mixed media piece *Bunnies reflect on Stadia III* is inspired by Julie Mehretu’s use of “ideological contributions from architecture, graffiti, corporate and national logos, as well as histories, wars, and geography” in her piece “Stadia III.” *Bunnies reflect on Stadia III* mirrors the use of “gestural fields of expression” found in Mehretu’s work.

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IMAGE CREDITS: (top to bottom) **page 1:** *Green Garden*, Sally Bowring; *Confederate Hair Flag*, Sonya Clark; **page 2:** *St. Lucy* (left) and *St. Benedict the Black* (right), Aimee Joyaux; *Untitled*, Andrew Kozlowski; **page 3:** *Dharma Diary Series: Wheel of Life*, Amie Oliver; *Octagonal Living Unit 2.0*, Craig Pleasants; *Residual #10, Winter*, Jon-Phillip Sheridan; **page 4:** *Ullnnnk*, Aggie Zed

Aggie Zed drew inspiration from Benjamin Marshall's "Noble, a Hunter Well Known in Kent," of 1810 and created the piece *Ullnnnk, an owner he knew to be lit*. Like the title of the work, the piece itself is a visual anagram of this romantic painting.

Amie Oliver has served on 1708 Gallery's Board of Directors since 1994. She has received numerous degrees from institutions such as Delta State University, Mississippi State University, and Bowling Green State University. She has dedicated several years to arts education, most recently as an adjunct faculty member at Virginia Commonwealth University. Oliver's artwork has been exhibited both nationally and internationally. Her work will be featured in an upcoming solo exhibition at Wilkes Art Gallery in Wilkesboro, NC in 2011.

The Linden Row Inn is an historic hotel located at 1st and Franklin Streets in downtown Richmond. Built in the 1840s, the hotel continues to offer a unique accommodation experience for travelers as well as private event spaces for professional and social gatherings. It also functions as a satellite exhibition space for 1708 Gallery. Part of the mission of our curatorial work for this space is to show contemporary art that complements and creates a bridge with the historic interior and unique architecture. For more information about The Linden Row Inn, please visit their website: www.lindenrowinn.com

1708 Gallery is a non-profit arts organization committed to presenting exceptional new art. 1708 Gallery is committed to providing opportunities for artistic innovation for emerging and established artists and to expanding the understanding and appreciation of new art for the public.

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