RIRKRT TIRAVANIJA: WHO’S AFRAID OF RED, YELLOW, AND GREEN? @ HIRSHHORN

The Thai conceptual artist Rirkrit Tiravanija brings his work to the Hirshhorn for the first time with a culinary experience that invites visitors to participate in the art—as well as share a meal of curry together. “By framing this everyday activity as art, Tiravanija calls attention to the beauty in a shared meal, addressing themes around memory, culture, and community,” the museum says. Works also include a wall mural that will be drawn live by local students who will share the artist’s stories about Thai government policies. Area cinephiles, take note: Director Apichatpong Weerasethakul (Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives) is curating a series of documentary shorts that will also be included in the exhibition.

May 17–July 24 at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.
MORE IS MORE: MULTIPLES @ NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WOMEN IN THE ARTS

Somewhere on the spectrum of an artist's work between a one-of-a-kind fine artwork and the Franklin Mint lies the multiple: a limited edition of a piece (often a dinner plate, tote bag, pair of sunglasses, toys, etc) usually produced in conjunction with a design house. This exhibition draws 25 such objects from the NMWA collection created by artists including Barbara Kruger, Helen Marten, Jiha Moon, Cindy Sherman, and Mickalene Thomas. "Celebrating multiples as a medium—for both their utilitarian characteristics and their innovative artistry—More is More challenges the traditional notion that a work of art must be singular or unique to have value," the museum says.

May 3–Sept. 15 at the National Museum of Women in the Arts.
Charlie Visconage, a stand-up comic-turned painter, specializes in low-priced canvases that depict a personal worldview in which, as he puts it, "guns are golden, animals have attitude problems, and my subjects have probably had a few drug
“experiences they wouldn’t tell Mom about.” The artist wraps up his three-month residency at Hole in the Sky with an interactive evening that promises fortune telling and destruction of your inner demons. Milk Cult, local purveyors of ice cream sandwiches and tacos, will provide the food and a not insignificant portion of fun. 

May 18 at 7 p.m. at Hole in the Sky DC. $10.

HELEN ZUGHAIB: MIGRATIONS @ WOODROW WILSON HOUSE

Washington-based artist Helen Zughaib’s recent work addressing Syrian migration was inspired by Jacob Lawrence’s ambitious Migration Series, which depicted the migration of African Americans from the rural South to the industrial North after World War I. Staging it at the Woodrow Wilson House encourages “a reexamination of Wilson’s international legacy in the contemporary sphere,” per the venue. The exhibition’s timing is also apt, coinciding with the 100th anniversary of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference.

May 23–July 28 at the President Woodrow Wilson House. Opening reception takes place June 7 at 6 p.m.
HEDIEH JAVANSHIR ILCHI: I SURRENDER TO YOU, ASHEN LANDS AND BLUE SKIES @ HEMPHILL

The 10-foot square canvases of Tehran-born artist Ilchi, who currently lives and works in the D.C. area, seem like formidable abstractions. But look closer: As Hemphill points out, her paintings combine Persian art and modern American techniques.

May 11-June 29 at Hemphill Fine Arts. Opening reception May 11, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
ERIC UHLIR @ HILLYER

Uhlir, who grew up in Southern California and has since relocated to Washington, paints boldly colored canvases in which amorphous figures break down in dizzying abstractions. As the artist puts it, “A Géricault shipwreck or heroic Joan Mitchell become the culturally shared currency that allows us to relate to each other and make sense of a seemingly senseless present built on the triumphs and tragedies of the past.”
May 3–26 at IA&A at Hillyer. An artist talk takes place May 8 at 6:30 p.m.

WHISTLER IN WATERCOLOR @ FREER

You’ve seen the Peacock Room and Arrangement in Grey and Black No.1—a Whistler’s Mother. But have you seen the artist’s watercolors? Museum founder Charles Lang Freer amassed the world’s largest collection of paintings, including more than 50 landscapes, figures, and interiors. These works, the museum says, show how Whistler “reinvented himself in the 1880s and painted his way into posterity.”
May 18–October 6 at the Freer Gallery of Art.
ZATOS: SECRET CITIES OF THE SOVIET EMPIRE @ NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM

In conjunction with the exhibit Secret Cities: The Architecture and Planning of the Manhattan Project, the National Building Museum hosts Fordham University professor Asif Siddiqi for this lecture about the more than 40 secret Cold War Soviet cities at which scientific and military research work was carried out. Siddiqi will also discuss how the legacy of these cities has evolved since the end of the Cold War.

May 14, at 6:30 p.m. at the National Building Museum. $20.
9 Art Exhibits To Explore This Month

5 Ways To Have A Totally Free Weekend Around D.C.