

IN THE GALLERIES



JIN LEE/HILLYER ART SPACE

Shattering exhibition at Hillyer Art Space

Concrete and heavy tools of Jin Lee's 'Exploit' are a call for transformation

BY MARK JENKINS

To prove that he should be king of Britain, Arthur pulled a sword from a stone. That feat is evoked, visually, at least, by Jin Lee's "Exploit." The local sculptor's Hillyer Art Space show consists of blocks of concrete, partly shattered by wooden and metal wedges. The point of these exercises is not to summon anything from the man-made rock, but simply to smash the implements into it. The results are brawny metaphors for change.

Lee varies the format by tinting the concrete in assorted colors, including black, green and brick red. Inherent in her method is another variation: The blocks shatter in multiple ways, yielding different sorts of shards to be arranged into tableaux of destruction.

Sculptors have long shaped hard and heavy materials, of course, but traditionally the goal



RACHEL SCHECHTMAN/HILLYER ART SPACE

Hemphill Fine Art's storefront location at 1700 L St. NW, but they divide rather than connect. Radiating from a center point, the oblique spans of "TOKI Synth Series 005: Reverb" carve the raw space into rooms of a sort. The strings are thin, closely grouped

TOP: Jin Lee, "Exploit" (2016), concrete, steel, wood, cast iron, brass and copper.

ABOVE: Rachel Schechtman,

dimensional areas. Contiguous black dashes on the walls and floor in one corner mark off a small chunk of the gallery as a separate place. Nearby, 3-D angles protrude from various sections of wall, as though a room from another dimension partly intersects this one.

Kramm is as interested in demonstrating the various forms that dotted lines can take as he is in using them to divide an open area. The show includes a few small pieces on folded paper, as well as a rectangle of neon tubing that's taped over at regular intervals to simulate dashes floating in space. In the dark, the piece might conjure that illusion, but Kramm's goal is not to fool the senses. He uses the visual language of blueprints and diagrams to turn actual spaces into theoretical ones, a process that calls on the mind more than the eye.

Wade Kramm: Dotted Space On view through Aug. 28 at Target Gallery, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. 703-838-4565, Ext. 4. torpedofactory.org/partners/target-gallery.

1460 Wall Mountables

Every summer, the District of Columbia Arts Center uses string to divide its walls into 2-by-2-foot squares, each rentable to artists or would-be artists for \$15. The string isn't part of the show; it comes down once entrants have staked their claims. The selection this year is fairly typical, with lots of stuff that's more pulp fiction than fine

BOOK BRIEF

In case you're wondering what you can do for the book festival

BY RON CHARLES

Here's a sweltering thought experiment: Imagine the National Book Festival broiling on the Mall this weekend. *Hot books*, indeed!

Fortunately, a couple of years ago, the Library of Congress moved the festival into the air-conditioned Walter E. Washington Convention Center. And this year, there's another improvement: The city's biggest literary event is taking place several weeks later: Sept. 24.

The lineup of authors is as dazzling as ever, though, including Colson Whitehead, Ken Burns, Annette Gordon-Reed, Stephen King, Joyce Carol Oates and a hundred more. Look for a special guide to the festival in The Washington Post on Sept. 18.

As you're making plans to attend, you may also consider making plans to help out. The festival is such a success largely because of the 1,000 volunteers who keep everything moving along smoothly.

Volunteer coordinator Faye Levin says: "Even the smartest festival-goers have difficulty navigating the convention center, and this seems to be an issue that more signage alone won't fix. As a result, we have added 50 Hall Chaperones for each shift to the mix."

Volunteers will also help usher featured authors to where they need to be; hand out posters, programs and C-SPAN bags; answer questions; and distribute lunches to other volunteers.

To participate, you just need to commit to serving one 4½-hour shift, which, believe me, will fly by in a blur of literary delights.

Soon after last year's festival, one of the volunteers sent a note to Levin that captured the spirit of the day: "No matter how enticing the Web and TV might be, there are still thousands of people who love authors and books and reading. My faith in civilization is renewed!"

If you'd like to help, please register by clicking here to fill out the Google submission form. (If you have any questions, write to Levin at faye.levin@ketchum.com.)

Training is easy. All you have to do is attend one of the three briefing sessions in the Madison Building at 101 Independence Ave. SE:

- Tuesday, Sept. 20, 7-8:30 p.m. (Mumford Room).
- Thursday, Sept. 22, 1:30-3 p.m. (Pickford Theater).
- Friday, Sept. 23, 10:30 a.m.-noon. (Montpelier Room).

No matter which training session you choose to attend, you'll learn everything you need to know, and you'll get an official National Book Festival T-shirt, which is the coolest literary swag you'll score this year.

The Post has been a charter sponsor of the festival since it began 15 years ago, and you'll see about two dozen Post writers and editors introducing featured authors at the convention center. Read on.

bookworld@washpost.com

Ron Charles is the editor of Book World.

Realism

Landscapes and cityscapes are the most common genres in "The Realism Exhibit," a rotating selection of paintings at Marin-Price Galleries by about a dozen contemporary artists. The styles are as traditional as the subjects, and the work is notable more for exceptional skill than for any distinctive vision. But the show does perform one intriguing flip: The rural scenes are often more ominous than the urban ones.

That might simply be a matter of palette, as with Adolf Sehring's "Autumn Appalachia," which renders a farm in dark fall colors. Twilight or a gathering storm gives a hint of menace to Joseph Sheppard's dramatic "Corn Field," in which red light slips through black clouds. Much sunnier are Arthur Day's slightly flattened New York vignettes, notably one of an unpopulated Penn Station. Jenness Cortez's charming "Materiel de Cuisine" depicts a simpler subject — a French cookery shop with a bright green front. Yet its intricate play of light and shadow makes the picture as complex as any in this array of direct and detailed canvases.

The Realism Exhibit On view through Aug. 31 at Marin-Price Galleries, 7022 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda. 301-718-0622. marin-price.com.

style@washpost.com

Opening Soon!

was to give shape and even delicacy. Lee's pieces exemplify modernist art's emphasis on ideas and process over form and outcome. The heavy tools and ruptured blocks are substantial, but they merely illustrate Lee's call for transformation.

Equally violent, and potentially more disturbing, is "Consumables," also at Hillyer. What's being consumed in Rachel Schechtman's mixed-media assemblages is the human body, eaten by disease and hewed by surgery. To conjure fleshly weakness, the D.C. artist combines medical gear with incongruous materials, such as used motor oil, and chicken skin and fat. Some pieces are more evocative than others, but most gallerygoers are likely to experience a sense of their own vulnerability.

Jin Lee: Exploit and Rachel Schechtman: Consumables On view through Aug. 28 at Hillyer Art Space, 9 Hillyer Ct. NW. 202-338-0325. hillyerartspace.org.

TOKI Synth Series

In Norse myth and Marvel Comics, a rainbow bridge links Asgard and Earth. Rainbow fiber bridges have been erected at

and brightly colored, so their glimmering appearance changes as the light does. Visitors can prowl through the passageways or sit on cushions and savor the synth-soul soundtrack.

TOKI is a collective nickname for Toluwalase Rufai and Khai Grubbs, who devised the installation. They're fledgling architects but also music lovers who invite their guests to write the name of their favorite album on a blank wall. (Some couldn't stop at one.) The songs TOKI chose to play influenced the piece, Rufai noted, and asking for others' musical faves expands the collective experience. It's just one of the ways, he said, "people become part of the artwork."

(The installation can be viewed from outside anytime; visitors can enter only on Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m.)

TOKI Synth Series 005: Reverb On view through Sept. 3 at Hemphill at 1700 L St. NW. 202-234-5601. hemphillfinearts.com.

Wade Kramm

At Target Gallery, Wade Kramm also is defining space with lines, but broken ones. "Dotted Space" uses them to enclose both flat and three-

"Amalgamate" (2016), glass vases, butcher's twine, salt solution and IV pole.

"Exploit" and Rachel Schechtman's "Consumables" exhibition are on display at Hillyer Art Space.

art.

Many contributors are represented by a single piece, but three have taken enough space to stage mini-surveys of their works. Paul Bennek is showing absurdist collages derived from the sort of 1950s-vintage comics once repurposed by Roy Lichtenstein; the most effective depict square-jawed men whose reality has been just slightly skewed.

Gregory Ferrand uses a sort of graphic-novel style, but painted in acrylic. Three of his four pictures are gray-blue portraits of impassive subjects; their emotionless faces contrast full-color vignettes, representing memories or musings, that seem to burst from their hearts.

Aside from their square format, Nihal Kececi's landscapes are unusual in this context. Her work is impressionistic and luminous, in the manner of J.M.W. Turner, with filtered sunlight expertly rendered in the skies. In a show full of outlined figures, Kececi's soft colors and mutable forms stand out.

1460 Wall Mountables On view through Aug. 28 at District of Columbia Arts Center, 2438 18th St. NW. 202-462-7833. dcaartscenter.org.

"A superb new show!
A moving, thoroughly entertaining tribute
to the indomitable human spirit." —Variety

COME FROM AWAY

A NEW MUSICAL



Performances start September 2!

book, music and lyrics by Irene Sankoff and David Hein; music supervision by Ian Eisendrath; choreographed by Kelly Devine; directed by Christopher Ashley

www.fords.org | Tickets: (888) 616-0270

Lead Sponsors: Exxon Mobil Corporation; Siemens Corporation