



## AT HILLYER

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019



**What: May 2019 Exhibitions Featuring solo exhibitions by:**

Pietro Ruffo: May 3 – June 30, 2019

Eric Uhlir: May 3 – May 26, 2019

Marcel Artes Deolazo: May 3 – June 2, 2019

**Where:** IA&A at Hillyer, 9 Hillyer Court NW, Washington, DC 20008

**Opening Reception:** Friday May 3, 2019, 6-9pm (During Dupont Circle's First Friday; Free, \$8 Suggested Donation)

**Artist Talks with Eric Uhlir and Marcel Artes Deolazo:** May 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm

**More Info:** <http://athillyer.org>

**Description:** Hillyer presents three new exhibitions opening on May's First Friday, featuring Pietro Ruffo, Eric Uhlir, and Marcel Artes Deolazo. In *CONSTELLATIONS/MIGRATION*, Pietro Ruffo draws inspiration from the geographers, cartographers, and astronomers of antiquity to tackle the timeless mysteries of human movement, conflict, and assimilation. Assuming that migration and resettlement have always been central to the survival of species—whether human or animal—the artist explores these elusive themes in a series of extraordinary works that reflect on the ancient frictions and fusions between peoples, places, and cultures of the world. Eric Uhlir's *Recalled in Human Memory* features large abstracted paintings considering the line

between reference and history in an attempt to give voice to conflicted space between civilization and the natural world. Marcel Artes Deolazo *300.3A Creative-Compulsive Disorder* refers to his journey through line and mark-making—whether two-dimensional or three-dimensional—to give form to the provocative thoughts, arguments, and symbolism that pass through his mind as he creates, always with a biting sense of humor. Guests can meet the artists at the opening reception on Friday, May 3rd from 6-9pm, during Dupont Circle's First Friday Gallery Walk.

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(Washington, DC) IA&A at Hillyer presents three new solo exhibitions opening on May's First Friday, featuring Pietro Ruffo, Eric Uhler, and Marcel Artes Deolazo. The exhibitions will **open on Friday, May 3, 2019 and will run through Sunday, May 26, 2019**. The artists will be present to talk about their work with visitors at the **opening reception on Friday, May 3, 2019 from 6-9pm**. The Artist Talk with Eric Uhler and Marcel Artes Deolazo will be held on Wednesday, May 8.

**Pietro Ruffo (Rome, Italy): CONSTELLATIONS/MIGRATION**

For an artist, it is always a unique challenge to glean new insights from complex phenomena, such as that of human migration—an ancient, mysterious process that involves many peoples and nations and a welter of data and cultural forces. In *CONSTELLATIONS/MIGRATION*, Pietro Ruffo draws inspiration from the geographers, cartographers, and astronomers of antiquity to tackle the timeless mysteries of human movement, conflict, and assimilation. Assuming that migration and resettlement have always been central to the survival of species—whether human or animal—the artist explores these elusive themes in a series of extraordinary works that reflect on the ancient frictions and fusions between peoples, places, and cultures of the world.

Ruffo's suite of four large drawings, titled *GOLD MIGRATIONS* (ink on emergency blanket), juxtaposes the physiognomies of national borders (North America, South America, Africa, Italy) with ancient historical scenes of migrants and native peoples reimagined as fantastic narratives. The motif of a gold blanket underscores the travails of migrants and others who seek to integrate into regions and communities that hold different values from their own. In three tapestries titled *SKY WALKERS*, the artist employs cut-out silhouettes of human forms to suggest an increasingly interconnected humanity, one that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. These luminous works return us to a world before maps, to an ancestral journey that looked to the sky—the sun, stars, and the earth's magnetic field—for its survival.

With these multifaceted works, this exhibition casts a spotlight on the timeless phenomena of the displacement of persons and cultures, from the rich perspective of global history. This exhibition is presented in partnership with the Italian Cultural Institute in Washington, DC, and is supported by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities through a Sister Cities grant.

Pietro Ruffo (b. 1978) studied Architecture at the University of Rome before moving to New York for a research scholarship at Columbia University. Since 2004, he has been working in Rome from his studio at Pastificio Cerere. Ruffo's art investigates the great issues of universal history—especially individual freedom and dignity, which are constantly threatened by the ongoing homogenization contemporary society. Ruffo's main solo exhibitions include: "Constelacoes Migracoes", Centro cultural Correios, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; "L'illusion parfaite", Galerie Italienne, Paris; "Terra Incognita", Delhi; "Breve storia del resto del mondo", Fondazione Puglisi Cosentino, Catania, Italy; "SPAD SVII", Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome; "The Political Gymnasium", Blain Southern London; "A complex Istant", Moscow, special project for the Fourth Moscow Biennale; "Irhal Irhal", Lorcan O'Neill gallery, Rome.

**Eric Uhler (Washington, DC): Recalled in Human Memory**

In his current body of work, Eric Uhler explores abstraction in a visceral language of paint, considering the line between reference and history in an attempt to give voice to conflicted space. Irreverence and absurdity battle amid parables of conflict between civilization and the natural world.

Each piece springs from the experience of looking, using varying degrees of abstraction as the scaffolding on which he hangs references and structure to entice the viewer, while leaving entrances and exits relatively unobstructed. References are not secrets in these kinetic abstractions, they're the condition of the work which enables the viewer to travel fluidly between content and context. 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.

Eric Uhlir is a painter and photographer. He grew up in the sunny melting pot of 1980's Southern California and earned his BFA in Studio Art from the University of Texas–Austin in 2003. Growing up in the relentlessly sun drenched urban sprawl of the southland will forever color anyone's perspective. This hyper colored, surfer cool has always inflected his art, whether it was watercolors of the ocean as a boy or the chaotic, reference-laden abstraction he's pursuing now. He currently lives and works in Washington, DC with his wife Phoebe and their dog, Violet.

### **Marcel Artes Deolazo (Alexandria, VA): 300.3A Creative-Compulsive Disorder**

The essential features of Creative-Compulsive Disorder are recurrent obsessions or compulsions to create just about anything—severe enough to be time-consuming and even to cause marked distress or significant impairment when the creative process cannot be carried out to satisfaction. For Deolazo, the title of his solo exhibition refers to his journey through line and mark-making—whether two-dimensional or three-dimensional—to give form to the provocative thoughts, arguments, and symbolism that pass through his mind as he creates, always with a biting sense of humor. This exhibition gives insight into topics he has been exploring for over thirty years, such as sexuality, inclusiveness, technology, symbolism. While living in Italy and throughout Europe, Deolazo was exposed to artwork that continues to influence his own work, as can be seen in his variations on classical themes from the European Masters.

Marcel Artes Deolazo studied illustration at Syracuse University before moving to New York City to work in the fashion industry. He later relocated to Milan to work for Maison Valentino and other Italian fashion houses. Since then, he has freelanced as an illustrator for *Italian Vogue* and other Condé Nast publications. Deolazo currently maintains a studio located at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, an artist community on the waterfront of Old Town Alexandria. He was juried into the Torpedo Factory Artists' Association in 2015, and the majority of his work and art processes can be seen by the visiting public at his shared studio.

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### **Gallery Information**

IA&A at Hillyer (formerly Hillyer Art Space) is a program of International Arts & Artists (IA&A), a nonprofit arts service organization dedicated to promoting cross-cultural understanding and exposure to the arts internationally. IA&A fulfills its mission by providing programs and services to artists, arts institutions, cultural organizations, and the public. Hillyer supports IA&A's mission through a series of exhibitions and public programs that feature local, regional, and international artists. Hillyer's exhibition series focuses on under-represented artists, both emerging and established, that have not had a major solo exhibition within the last three years. Hillyer is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, and the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. We are located in Dupont Circle, next to the Phillips Collection, in Washington, DC, two blocks from the Red Line Metro, Dupont Circle Q Street Exit. The gallery is open seven days a week, Saturday-Monday 12-5pm, Tuesday-Friday 12-6pm, and by appointment.

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*High-resolution images available upon request*