

## IN THE GALLERIES

## Conjuring images from as vast as the ocean to the cellular level

BY MARK JENKINS

Although Eve Stockton's pictures are unusually large for woodcut prints, their scale suits her subjects, which include sea, sky and sun. "Origin Stories," the Alexandria artist's show at McLean Project for the Arts, presents about 40 pictures, among them variations on such archetypes as "Waves" or "Clouds." Immaculately made, the prints often feature repeated patterns and a powerful centeredness. Metallic silver ink evokes energy and light, frequently contrasting rich oceanic or atmospheric blues.

Some of the prints have a clear vantage point. The "Woodland Landscape" series gazes up through the trees, representing that perspective so strongly that viewers may find themselves craning their necks. Other outlooks are more ambiguous, suggesting both macro and micro views. The range of vistas underscores the show's title. Stockton's seascapes could depict today's oceans or the primordial soup that preceded them; her "Bloom" series portrays flowers, but the buds also resemble cells.

Stockton regularly exhibits new prints at Long View Gallery, but this selection includes some older ones, as well as a few sculptures. Among the latter are stone pieces whose streamlined curves are akin to the woodcuts' simplified ripples. There are waves as well in a floor sculpture, which is surrounded by stones from a Nova Scotia beach. Stockton used to be an architect, a background implied by both this structure and her largest prints, each of them a whole environment. Whether working in one or three dimensions, Stockton conjures a strong sense of place.

The miniature cosmos created by Kyujin Lee, whose "Replay and Reshuffle" is also at the McLean center, draws from fairy tales and puppet shows. The Seoul-born D.C. artist is a skilled realist, but her blue-heavy paintings begin as abstract gestures. These are extrapolated



EVE STOCKTON/MCLEAN PROJECT FOR THE ARTS



KYUJIN LEE/MCLEAN PROJECT FOR THE ARTS

**TOP:** A woodcut print by Eve Stockton, part of the "Origin Stories" exhibit, evokes the immense scale of her subjects, including sky, sea and sun, but also suggests a more primitive world. Her current show at McLean Project for the Arts also features older prints and sculpture, whose streamlined curves are similar to the woodcuts' simplified ripples.

**LEFT:** "D-Spell" by Kyujin Lee, of ink, watercolor and acrylic on canvas, also at the McLean gallery, puts together a fantasy-like miniature cosmos that draws from fairy tales and puppet shows, suggesting the logic of dreams.

into figurative scenarios that include toys, mermaids and Pinocchio. If Lee's pictures suggest the logic of dreams, so does the process by which she generates them.

**Eve Stockton: Origin Stories; Kyujin Lee: Replay and Reshuffle** Through Feb. 29 at McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean.

### Art Is Not Optional

The theme of a current group show is scribbled by artist and curator Dagmar Painter in a few lines of red neon: the words "art" and "optional" with an "x" over the second word. "Art Is Not Optional" is the title of the exhibition, the 100th and last overseen by Painter at the Jerusalem Fund Gallery Al-Quds.

The show's venue is most concerned with the status of

Palestinians, which some of the works address directly. Traditional textile designs and Arabic calligraphy feature in many pieces. A few pictures appear nearly abstract, yet play on the fraught topic of borders: Lori Katz's "Green Line" treats demarcation as a color-field composition, while Annamanda Seelye Salzman offers three outlined blobs that are actually competing ideas of the borders of Jerusalem.

Other contributors venture far from the Middle East. Michael Keating's photo is of Lower Manhattan, and Adrian Charara tweaks the art market by placing multiple Mona Lisas on a cow. Painting on a wood construction, Micaela Amateau Amato makes a direct appeal to Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi about the genocide of her country's Rohingya minority. For Painter and the artists she has assembled, support for the dispossessed is another thing that's not optional.

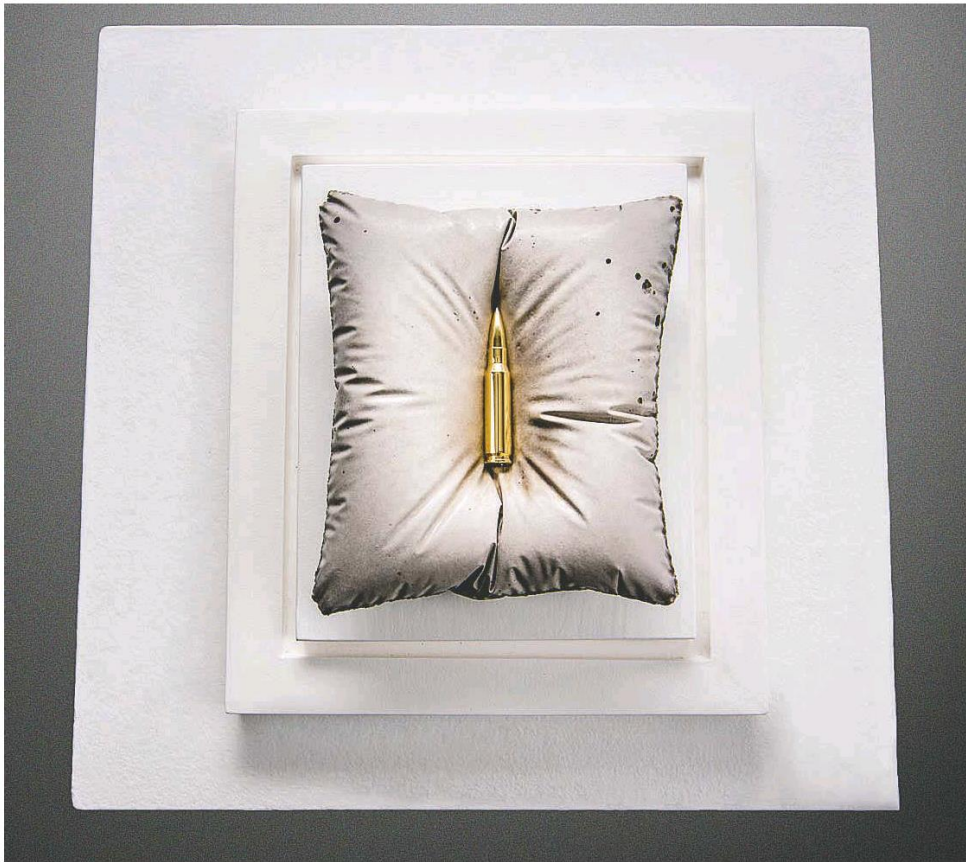
**Art Is Not Optional** Through Feb. 28 at the Jerusalem Fund Gallery Al-Quds, 2425 Virginia Ave. NW.

### Amarist

The centerpiece of "Welcome?" is a full-size rendering of a faceless human figure who's wrapped in a gold heat-reflecting blanket and kneeling behind a barbed-wire fence. The installation, which fills most of the smallest gallery at IA&A at Hillyer, is stark and grim. Yet there's some dark humor elsewhere in this show of work by Amarist, the collective name for the Barcelona duo of Aran Lozano and Clara Campo.

Those gold blankets, provided to people who cross the Mediterranean to Europe, are a motif in recent art about perilous migration from Africa and the Middle East. Amarist also addresses the politics of immigration on this side of the Atlantic. On one wall are 30 pieces of gold-plated barbed wire, each one different but all enclosed in identical clear-

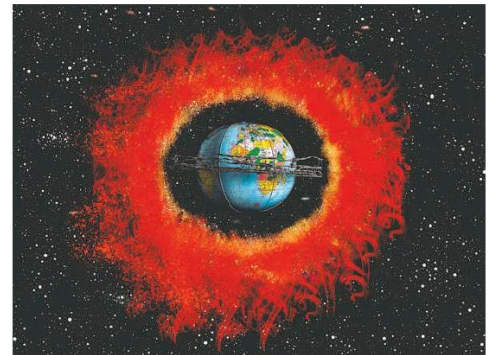
SEE GALLERIES ON E5



COURTESY OF AMARIST/1&amp;A AT HILLYER



OLIVIA TRIPP MORROW /COURTESY OF WILLOW STREET GALLERY



AMR MOUNIB/COURTESY OF THE JERUSALEM FUND GALLERY AL-QUDS

## GALLERIES FROM E4

plastic packs with the slogan "Make America Safe Again." Near this faux-commercial display are a lone gold bullet nestled in a cast-concrete pillow and a bomb-shaped light that appears to have smashed through a steel-and-concrete enclosure with the force of a bunker-blasting warhead.

Bombs and barbed wire recur in Amarist's art, as does gold. Lozano and Campo fabricate functional and decorative objects, including razor-wire

jewelry intended to render the fencing "a symbol of respect, tolerance and human dignity," according to their statement. Aestheticizing symbols of violence and oppression doesn't automatically advance tolerance, of course. Some consumers of such imagery simply find it cool. Few viewers, though, could misread the show's major piece. Its juxtaposition of human and inhumane is powerful and unambiguous.

**Amarist: Welcome?** Through March 1 at IA&A at Hillyer, 9 Hillyer Ct. NW.

**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: "One Bullet," a cast-concrete pillow and bomb-shaped light by the artist duo known as Amarist. Olivia Tripp Morrow's "Untitled (Gradient Branch No. 3)" makes use of everyday items such as donated women's pantyhose. "Space Traveler," a digital photo on metal by Amr Mounib.**

## Uncommon Goods

Sometimes the results of alchemy aren't all that precious. The four area artists in Willow Street Gallery's "Uncommon Goods" work with everyday stuff, making things that intentionally retain much of the materials' ordinariness.

Olivia Tripp Morrow turns frayed women's undergarments into wall sculptures; the one that most alters the garments treats pantyhose as vines suspended from a real tree branch. Nicole Salimbene also arrays dangling

objects, but hers are pages of *Artforum* magazine, rolled so they register simply as black and white columns. The forms in Sarah Irvin's handsome cyanotypes are derived from her daughter's toys, which yield house-like shapes in shades of blue and tan. All three women are remarking on customary notions of female roles, whether as sex objects, marginalized artists or wives and mothers.

Damon Arhos joins the conversation by using irons — associated with domestic chores more often performed by women

— in place of brushes. Executed in white and black on brown wood, his abstract pictures consist of drips and repeated outlines of the appliance's flat surface. The shape might be hard to identify if the artist hadn't lined up three paint-spattered irons below one of his paintings. Like his cohorts, Arhos doesn't disguise his work's commonplace origins.

**Uncommon Goods** Through March 1 at Willow Street Gallery, 6925 Willow St. NW.

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