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McLean Project for the Arts

A message from our Artistic Director

Artistic Notes

Dear MPA Friends and Supporters,

As I write this I am still surrounded by exuberant children's artwork, but not for long. It's take-down day for our annual Youth Art Exhibitions, an MPA and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) partnership for over forty years. Organized by the McLean and Langley Pyramid art teachers and hosted by MPA in our galleries, it's inspiring to see the creativity and talent of young artists (K-12) and witness the excitement they feel showing their families and friends their work hanging in a "real art gallery".

Next up, opening on April 11th and running through June 15th, are our annual Spring Solo exhibits. Chosen through an open call, with almost 200 artists applying, we are featuring three artists whose work demonstrates tremendous depth and creativity. While often we look for connection between the artists showing in our different spaces, these three, Abol Bahadori, Laura Grothaus and Osvaldo Mesa speak in three very different visual languages, making highly original work both aesthetically and conceptually.

Titled "Inner Gardens," Abol Bahadori's exhibition features imaginative, super-charged, dynamic images that highlight by color and space and are created by using a unique mixed media process that combines digital printing and painting.

"Return to the Library of L.E. Grothaus "is the title of Laura Grothaus' installation centering on a set of "magical" altered books, that offer the viewer a chance to interact and explore ideas of history, story, place, personal identity, folklore, nature, religion and more.

"Toys in the Hands of History" features current paintings by Afro-Cuban, Baltimore-based artist Osvaldo Mesa. These vital, energetic and intensely colorful works combine an exploration of western painting traditions and ideas and objects from African spirituality.

I hope you will all stop by the galleries to experience these three unique and varied exhibitions.

Nancy Sausser

Curator and Artistic Director

Spring Solos Open April 11

McLean Project for the Arts will open its 2024 Spring Solo Exhibitions on April 11, 2024. The three featured artists include *Toys in the Hands of History: Paintings by Osvaldo Mesa, Return to the Library of L.E. Grothaus: Altered Books by Laura Grothaus,* and *Inner Gardens: Works by Abol Bahadori.* The exhibitions will run through June 15, 2024, with an Opening Exhibition Reception on Thursday, April 11, 2024 from 7-9pm.

"We are pleased to offer these three outstanding artists—selected from our recent open call for proposals—solo exhibitions at MPA," said MPA Curator and Artistic Director Nancy Sausser. "Solo exhibitions are hard to come by, and MPA is happy to be able to offer artists this important opportunity to show a significant body of their work, particularly in light of how many exhibitions were cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic."

Toys in the Hands of History: Paintings by Osvaldo Mesa, Emerson Gallery

Osvaldo Mesa taps into his hybrid experience as an Afro-Cuban artist to make paintings that combine an exploration of western painting traditions (Medieval, Baroque, Surrealism and Abstraction) with ideas and objects from African spirituality. Born in Cuba, raised in Miami, and a longtime resident of Baltimore, Mesa makes intensely robust paintings full of color, form, pattern and movement. These works conjure a unique and magical energetic vitality, offering a glimpse into a dynamic, multidimensional inner world.

Return to the Library of L.E. Grothaus: Altered Books by Laura Grothaus, Emerson Gallery

Laura Grothaus exhibits a series of altered books that offer the viewer a chance to build their own story from the contents contained. Drawing on the history of the book as an object, ideas about place, personal identity, folklore, nature, and religion, and also her work as an educator and activist, she has created works that spark imagination and connection. Combining found and sculptural objects with painted surfaces, Grothaus' Magic Books can be arranged and rearranged to honor the possibility inherent in all our tales, personal, communal and infinite.

Inner Gardens: Works by Abol Bahadori, Atrium Gallery

In his Inner Gardens series Abol Bahadori creates layered mixed media works that embrace the dichotomy and contradictions that comprise reality. He prioritizes color over shape and form. Space is also important, skillfully rendered to create a sense of place that can be imaginatively entered by the viewer. Working on a small to medium scale, and through geometric, organic, abstract and recognizable imagery, Bahadori's dynamic, electric images glow with energy as they highlight inner and outer landscapes that are both recognizable and unfamiliar.

The MPA Atrium Gallery will be available for viewing during McLean Community Center operating hours. The Emerson Gallery will be open for visitors Mondays through Saturdays from 10am – 4pm.

In addition to the April 11 opening reception, an Artist Talk is scheduled for, Saturday, June 1 at 11am; and a Tea & Talk with Artistic Director Nancy Sausser on Tuesday, June 4, 11am.

MPA's 2024 Spring Solo Exhibitions are funded in part by ArtsFairfax.
The Spring Solo Opening Exhibition Reception is presented by The Mather.

Exhibition Information

MPA 2024

SPRING BENEFIT

THE EVENING OF
Thursday, May 16
7:30 - 9:30pm
Historic Langley Farms

EVENT CHAIRS
Cynthia Steele Vance and Mandy Mafi

BENEFITING
McLean Project for the Arts

Chee Keong Kung, Ripple Canto VII (Dispersion No 47)

Spring Benefit 2024 is May 16—Secure Your Sponsorship Today!

Please mark your calendars and join us on **Thursday, May 16, 2024** for MPA's signature spring fête, Spring Benefit. Co-chaired by Cynthia Steele Vance and Mandy Mafi, the May 16 sunset party will take place at a private residence in Langley Farms. In addition to festive fare from Windows Catering and live music, this year's Spring Benefit will also feature an exhibition of works by **Chee Keong Kung**, a contemporary artist specializing in metal and mixed media sculptures and installations. **Delegate Kathleen Murphy**, who recently retired after representing Virginia's 34th District since 2015, will serve as this year's Spring Benefit Guest of Honor.

Please consider joining us as a Spring Benefit sponsor. MPA relies on funds raised at Spring Benefit to further its mission to educate and inspire the community through visual arts exhibitions and arts education programs--including MPA ArtReach, which extends these exhibitions into the community through gallery tours and workshops for FCPS Title I elementary schools and other underserved groups.

For your convenience, make a secure payment online at: https://mpaart.org/springbenefit2024/.

Individual ticket sales open Monday, April 15.

Thank you for your generous support. We hope to see you on May 16!

Event Information

MPA Summer Art Camps Teacher Feature: Nathan Johnson!

"Our summer art camps are creative, colorful, and, most importantly, FUN! I want my campers to explore and practice new art techniques and build on their creativity--all while enjoying the camp experience. I look forward to an awesome summer!"

-Nathan Johnson, MPA Summer Camp Lead Instructor

Collage artist, designer and illustrator **Nathan Johnson** returns for his sixth year with MPA Summer Art Camps. As an artist, Mr. Johnson seeks to find inspiration through what he sees in everyday life--a sunset, certain color combinations in a book, or images that pop into his head. "I find so much satisfaction in exploring the medium and letting it take me on a journey," says Mr. Johnson. A long-time art teacher for Fairfax County Public Schools, Mr. Johnson's work has appeared in the FCPS faculty art show. His work has also hung in the Maryland Federation of the Arts, Part Crowd Art Gallery in Toronto, Northern Virginia Community College Art Department, and at Busboys and Poets.

Artists of all ages are invited to join Mr. Johnson and our other experienced instructors at MPA Summer Art Camps. MPA's weekly themed camps are a great way to discover and explore a different art medium, make new friendships, and create artworks for friends and family to enjoy. Our camps have something for everyone, from ages 3 to 18.

Offerings include MPA Art Camps (ages 6-13) and Abrakadoodle Camps (ages 3-6), as well as our CIT program. Sessions run June 24-August 9. Sign up early to secure your spot--popular weeks are filling fast!

Please review our MPA Summer Camp Policies & Procedures. Contact Briana Clorey at bclorey@mpaart.org for more information.

Register for MPA Summer Art Camps

MPA ArtReach to Host Tours & Provide Classes Featuring Spring Solo Exhibitions

MPA's ArtReach Director Sharon Fishel will be welcoming FCPS Title I school tours and community groups to our galleries in the coming weeks to view our new Spring Solo exhibitions. Each tour will feature drawing opportunities via a new Gallery Guide as well as a guided look at the work of the exhibitions' three solo artists, engaging students grades K-6 with SOL concepts for language arts and poetry.

Fishel's ongoing weekly ArtReach classes with community partners this spring will also connect to these exhibitions, with themes relating to the work of the Spring Solo artists as well as incorporating language arts activities to engage students. As an example, this week's class at the Fairfax Wellness

Center for Older Adults involved students creating magical box and collage projects – and then Fishel encouraged students to share a story with their fellow students to describe their creations (pictured above). Thanks to our students for sharing their work.

To learn more about our ArtReach program and schedule a tour for your school or group, email Briana Clorey at bclorey@mpaart.org. MPA will subsidize school bus transportation for FCPS Title I Schools and is grateful to ArtsFairfax for a project grant awarded in support of these three exhibitions. If you'd like to make a contribution towards this outreach, visit our website at https://mpaart.app.neoncrm.com/forms/22.

MPA ArtReach Information

Register Now for a Spring Art Class!

Sessions begin next week!

Spring has officially sprung, bringing with it the start of MPA's Spring Art Class lineup! There's still time to register and join us for an exciting Spring Art class.

Adult Art Classes

- Drawing Basics (Colors, Lines and Motion) with Ahmed Zaidan, Saturdays from 2-4pm beginning April 6
- Colorful Mixed Media Paintings with M Jane Johnson, Mondays from 10am-1pm beginning April 8
- Freedom of Watercolor with Barbara Januszkiewicz, Thursdays from 10am-12:30pm beginning April 11
- Drawing and Painting Studio with David Carlson, Thursdays from 7-9:30pm, beginning April 11

We're also excited to offer two, one-day workshops with Ronni Jolles: Creating Artwork with Layered Paper: Trees in Springtime (Sunday, April 28 from 1-4pm) and Creating Artwork with Layered Paper: The Beach (Sunday, May 19 from 1-4pm)

Open Studio

Additionally, our Open Studio is also returning for the spring, with sessions on Tuesdays (April 9-May 28) and Saturdays (April 27-June 8). Attendees are welcome to register for the full session, or pay a drop-in fee of $20/class.

Youth Art Classes

For our younger artists, we are again offering a range of exciting offerings, including:

- Drawing Basics (Colors, Lines and Motion) with Ahmed Zaidan (Ages 13+), Saturdays from 2-4pm, beginning April 6
- Abrakadoodle Mini Doodlers (Tuesdays from 11am-12pm and Saturdays from 11am-12pm)
- Abrakadoodle Twoosy Doodlers (Thursdays from 10-10:45 and Saturdays from 10-10:45)

Teen artists ages 13+ are also invited to join Ronni Jolles for her Creating

Artwork with Layered Paper workshops, Trees in Springtime and The Beach.

For detailed descriptions on all of our fall classes, visit our website. Contact Briana Clorey at bclorey@mpaart.org with questions.

Explore Spring Class Offerings

Join MPA's Faculty!

MPA is excited to announce an OPEN CALL for Art Teachers!

We are looking for artists/teachers to teach art classes in our DuVal studio, located in the McLean Community Center, for adults, children and teens.

All media, processes and approaches considered. Openings beginning in Spring 2024. Both weekly classes and workshop formats considered. Salary commensurate with experience.

To apply, please provide a short (one page) proposal, resume, and 10 images of teacher/student work. Please contact Briana Clorey with questions (bclorey@mpaart.org).

Apply Now

MPA in the News

GazetteLeader: McLean Project for the Arts to Open Solo Exhibitions (03/27/2024)

District Fray: Discover the Art of Mesa, Grothaus, and Bahadori (03/24/2024)

TysonsToday: McLean Project for the Arts' Spring Benefit Set for May 16 (03/13/2024)

GazetteLeader: McLean Project for the Arts Sets Date, Place for Spring Gala (03/08/2024)

UPCOMING EVENTS

MPA Calendar of Events

April 11 - June 15, 2024: Spring Solos 2024

April 11: Spring Solos Opening Exhibition Reception, 7-9pm

April 24: Exclusive Max Mara Shopping Event, 6-8pm

May 16: MPA Spring Benefit 2024, 7:30-9:30pm

June 1: Spring Solos In-Person Artist Talk, 11am

June 4: Spring Solos Tea & Talk, 11am

→ DONATE NOW!

1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean, VA 22101

Gallery Hours: Monday through Saturday, 10am-4pm

Administrative Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 10am-4pm

Hours and Directions | www.mpaart.org | 703.790.1953

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