

ART NERD CITY GUIDES

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The (e)merge art fair re(e)merges in DC

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(e)merge art fair returns to the Capitol Skyline Hotel for its third year this October. Artist Brian Davis returns this year. Here is his “Three Parts” from 2013.
Photo Courtesy Emerge Productions, LLC.

(e)merge art fair is making its third appearance on the DC art scene this October, featuring artists, galleries, performances and programs to delight aesthetic aficionados and amateurs alike.

Trying to come up with a list of why Washingtonians and visitors to the area should make the three-day fair is like an Elizabeth Barrett Browning sonnet; let me count the ways. For one, the lineup of exhibitors is anything but static and you’re sure to get see some pretty fantastic stuff, ranging from photography to mixed media to performance. The Rubell-owned Capitol Skyline Hotel will be quite literally covered in art from October 3rd through October 6th. The lobby, hotel rooms, bathrooms,

around the pool, in the pool, and the parking garage are all exhibition space for the 80 galleries, 150 artists, and 30 countries represented this year. Mera Rubell and her husband Donald of the Rubell Family Collection in Miami, Florida, have been big supporters of the fair with having it at their Capitol Skyline Hotel since its inception. As a major collector and art scene regular, I asked Mera Rubell her thoughts on this particular fair and what it does for DC and the DC art community. Rubell was spot on when she commented on the importance of (e)merge's scale: "The size of the fair facilitates personal encounters and the city comes out to support and enjoy the exhibits, performances and the art for sale at (e)merge." It's not Frieze, it's not Scope, and it's not Art Basel. (e)merge is the smallest bear to the DC's Goldilocks, and it fits just right for this city. Out of the 150 artists showing this year, I only have room to mention a few I'm gearing up to see. So, here is a quick list of who I have my eyes on:

Nancy Daly is currently looking with social media and technology, in an attempt to make it transparent. What does your addiction to post, tweet, insta-over-uploads say about you? In her most recent series, *Missed Connections*, Daly uses a series of Crisco-filled boxes with laser-cut text on the sides. If you dare, you're welcome to crank the jack-in-the-box like mechanism on the box's side, which pushes the vile Crisco through the text to then have it flop on the floor in a gelatinous, grease pile. So, your sad Craigslist quest for love, according to Daly, says the following about you: "an event occurs and is later remembered, but the 'truth' of the situation or even the initial memory of it is lost."



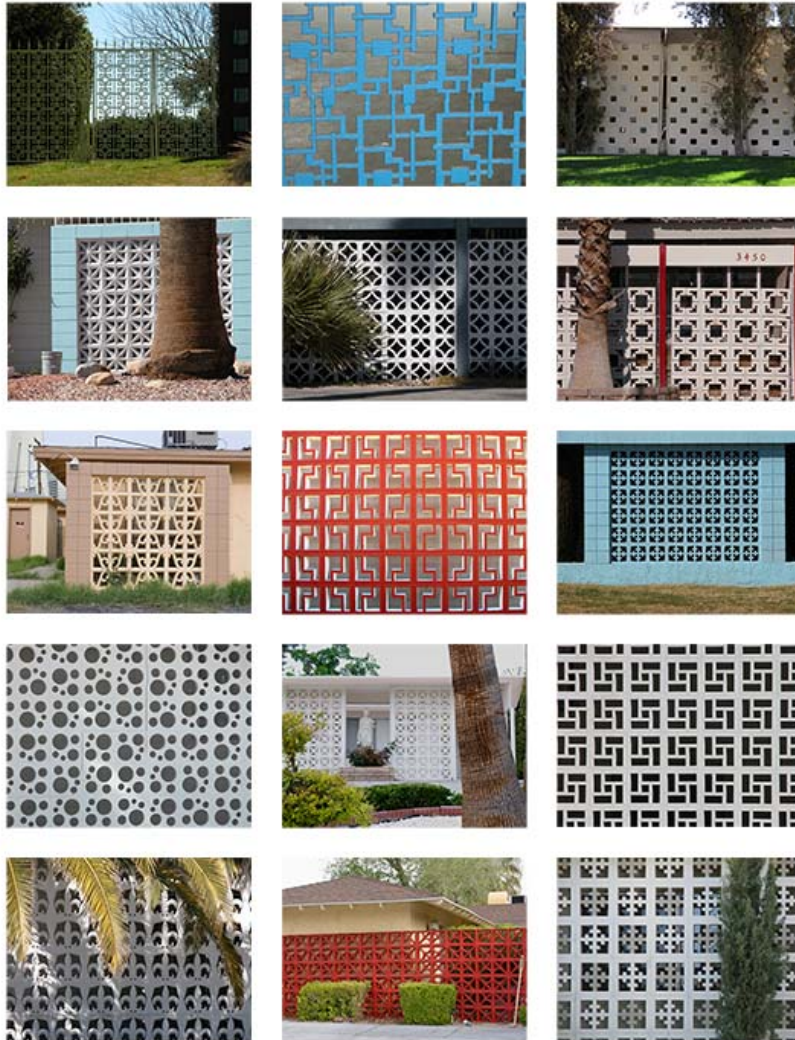
Daly's work is interactive in a way that makes you stop, step back, and think about modern social media. Image courtesy Nancy Daly, 2010.

Andrew Wodzianski's work is compelling, but I also find myself in virtual love with how he describes his work: "an artist working in crocodile tears, puppy dog tails, and magpie chatter. When not painting, professing, playing, or pretending, I like to pose Barbie dolls and print fashion plates." In his "Self Portrait as Ishmael" from the 2012 (e)merge art fair, Wodzianski floated around on top of a wooden casket, in the pool, for 36 hours. Talk about having a mad case of FOMO. It seems he likes to remove himself from social interaction in his performance pieces, pushing him into lonely solitary contemplation. This must be where the crocodile tears come in.



For the 2012 (e)merge art fair, Wodzianski built himself a coffin, and floated around in the Capitol Skyline Hotel's pool for 36 hours in "Self Portrait as Ishmael." Photo Courtesy Andrew Wodzianski, 2012.

Catherine Borg has some very intriguing photography work. It ranges from pretty weird to disorienting to quite lovely. Borg's "Ornamental Study" photography is a composite of images, all of retro architectural trellis work. Alone, I have always found this kind of structural detail a pock mark on architecture aesthetics and dated, as a testament to architecture that thankfully never made it past 1979. However, her assemblage is strikingly beautiful and almost had me appreciate the unfortunate painted concrete movement. Her multi-media *Self-Trending* from 2010 is also a fantastic piece of stop-motion animation, inspired by Borg's documentation of casinos in Las Vegas.



Borg's "Ornamental Study" makes me rethink the once-icky feeling I used to get when looking at American architecture of the 1970s. Photo Courtesy Catherine Borg

For admission rates and fair hours, visit

(e)merge's website: <http://www.emergeartfair.com/>

Plus be sure to check out their tumblr page: <http://emergeartfair.tumblr.com/>