

WASHINGTON CITY PAPER

(e)merge Art Fair

Thursday, Oct. 4 (ends Oct. 7)

By **Kriston Capps** • September 28, 2012



If you've never been to an art fair before, go in with gimlet eyes: There, you will see how the sausage gets made. Increasingly, dealers depend on art-fair revenue to supplement the sales that art galleries—loss leaders in the industry—aren't making at home. Then consider that art fairs are little more than overstimulating trade conventions, and you see why many in the nonwealthy art-o-sphere dread them. But

Washington's (e)merge Art Fair, now in its second year, offers something different: art, strictly for sale but reasonably easy to absorb in its entirety. It's not too different from the satellite fairs that take place in a dozen hotels during Art Basel Miami Beach: At (e)merge, dealers set up shop at the hotel (in this case, the Capitol Skyline), posting their wares in the hotel's rooms for viewers, who stroll through from all around the mid-Atlantic and beyond. (Though Washington's fair is nothing like Art Basel Miami Beach itself, the mammoth convention-center fair.) The big difference is the performance art, like that of Holly Bass (shown): (e)merge has a ton of it, and it makes the fair more than a market destination. It's an event that belongs on any art lover's calendar.

(e)merge Art Fair runs Oct. 4–7 at the Capitol Skyline Hotel, 10 I St. SW. \$15 per day. The fair's opening party with Eric Hilton begins tonight at 7 p.m. \$45 in advance, \$60 at the door. emergeartfair.com.