



A blog from [The Phillips Collection](#) in Washington D.C.

Opening Day for D.C.'s New International Contemporary Art Fair, (e)merge

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by Meg Kuck



In the Studio: Panelists Siobhan Rigg, Veronica Jackson and Jamie Smith with Moderator Klaus Ottmann at the Creative Voices DC panel on September 14. Photo: Meg Kuck

Like many of you, I've watched the countdown on the website, kept in time with updates on social networks, and attended panel discussions around the city in anticipation of D.C.'s new international contemporary art fair, [\(e\)merge](#) - which opens this evening and runs through Sunday afternoon.

Occupying the first two floors of the [Capitol Skyline Hotel](#) and some of its outdoor space - including a poolside performance - fair-goers will have ample opportunity to not only

experience work from D.C.'s emerging (get it?) art scene, but from international artists and galleries as far reaching as the Netherlands and Italy.

(e)merge

Last week our Director of the [Center for the Study of Modern Art](#) and Curator at Large [Klaus Ottmann](#) sat down with art professor and (e)merge exhibiting artist Siobhan Rigg, collector and consultant designer to (e)merge Veronica Jackson, and cofounder of Conner Contemporary Art, and (e)merge co-director Jamie Smith, to discuss how the fair came about and what fair-goers can expect.

A friendship quickly emerged (okay, enough with the puns) when Jamie Smith and Leigh Conner ([Conner Contemporary Art](#)) met Helen Allen in 2005, when Allen founded [Pulse](#). They realized their shared enthusiasm for supporting emerging art and promptly hatched the plan to organize a new international art fair for D.C.

Several elements about this weekend's fair make it stand out from all the other international art fairs. Mainly, and most impressively, all of the artists exhibiting at the fair are unrepresented, and the fair has provided them free exhibition space. Applications were vetted by a committee of curators, critics, and art world heavyweights such as Mera Rubell (collector and founder of [Rubell Family Collection](#)) and Matthew Higgs (director of [White Columns](#)).

In addition to the actual fair, performances and panel discussions are on the agenda for this weekend. Be sure to catch Phillips Director Dorothy Kosinski in [Saturday's panel](#), *Collecting for the Future*, at 2 pm. For a complete list of exhibitors and program information, visit the fair's [website](#).