

(e)merge 2014: Get Paid Edition

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An art-fair cannot escape the opulence of itself. At its best moments, you can see through the haze of comma-filled price sheets and crudités to see some great work. (e)merge, in a move away from many fairs, helps separate the art from the gilt by offering spaces directly to artists who don't have gallery representation, and for a reduced fee. Of course, those artists may still find themselves commenting on that still omnipresent art-fair marketplace reality.



Image credit: Holly Bass

Former [Corcoran Gallery exhibitor](#) Holly Bass finds storyteller and dancer bringing the once-frequent practice of hosting a party to pay a landlord to a performance art context. “Black Space Rent Party,” brought live music, an actual façade, games of bones (dominoes) and spades to the front yard of Capitol Skyline in a DC map-shaped house. There, entertainment, tales and drinks were provided for just the spectator’s consideration of a pledge to a bucket marked “<- Rent Help.” The roof’s diamond geography referencing shape has a point: in 1920’s DC, you may have come across a party just like this.



Meagan Mueller, who just left DC for the sculpture program at UC Santa Barbara, presents us with the coyest vision of art as furniture—collectors would never admit to the practice, but it's omnipresent in the art world. If a buyer needs their art to match the couch, Mueller goes a step further and integrates the wallpaper behind her art work as the piece itself (Pantone matched). The sneak implant of domesticity in to fine art is no one-off, however. Her physical, at times massive

works often borrow from Home Depot tropes and materials as they does [in her Wonder Valley, CA installation, derived from the innocuous wood-deck patio.](#)



Hamiltonian fellow and [GW Today profiled alum Larry Cook](#) sets up his fair-supplied hotel room as a club photo booth. Remember 14th & U? Larry Cook does (hint: not speakeasies nor steaks). And you may as well, if you've been to the Georgia & Florida Ave CVS almost any weekend night past 10pm. Cook's recreated what you'd find there, and what you'd see in the classic DC Go Go venues of churches and school gyms: the club photo booth, replete with hand-painted backdrop and a live mix from DJ Marvelous. Once taken with a Polaroid, now updated with a Nikon DSLR and thermal printer, Cook's art-fair vision extends from reality: He used to do this professionally.

Check out more highlights of the (e)mmerge Art Fair from the Washington City Paper's [Christina Cauterucci](#) and The Washington Post's [Michael O'Sullivan](#).