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Non-Smithsonian exhibits for 'nonessential' workers during the government shutdown

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With the museums on the Mall closed by the [government shutdown](#), many local workers who suddenly find themselves with a lot of time on their hands have fewer [good weekday attractions](#) with which to pass the time. But if you head away from the Smithsonians, you'll find plenty of diversions in smaller museums and galleries across the city. Here are a few arty essentials for the "nonessentials."



A collection of postcards of American life and landmarks in "Ellen Harvey: The Alien's Guide to the Ruins of Washington, D.C." at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. (Photo by Marvin Joseph/The Washington Post)

The Corcoran Gallery: It's the last week to see Ellen Harvey's "[The Alien's Guide to the Ruins of Washington D.C.](#)" an exhibition that tries to explain our city's monuments to an otherworldly being. Try explaining a government shutdown to them, amiright? The museum is open every day but Mondays and Tuesdays, and admission is \$10.

The Phillips Collection: Contemplate political gridlock in the [Laib Wax Room](#) or the Rothko Room -- if you go during the week, you might even have them all to yourself. The museum is closed on Mondays and admission is \$12.

The National Museum of Women in the Arts: Fans of the novel "The Time Traveler's Wife" may not have known that author [Audrey Niffenegger](#) is also a visual artist. Her paintings and drawings are on display at the museum, which is open seven days a week. Admission is \$10, though the museum is waiving its admission fee for furloughed workers.

Artisphere: As the "[clouds looming over Washington](#)" meme takes off, head across the river for Andy Warhol's "[Silver Clouds](#)." The Rosslyn arts center is closed Mondays and Tuesdays, but has special extended hours for the free exhibition: 4-11 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, noon-11 p.m. Friday-Saturday, and noon-5 p.m. Sunday.

American University Museum at the Katzen Art Center: Patrick McDonough's "[brightveridiansentinevents](#)" is an exhibition of clever visual puns and deeper statements about environmentalism. Open Tuesday-Sunday. Free.



Art fair-goers walk down the second floor corridor of the (e)merge art fair on September 22, 2011 in Washington, D.C. (Photo by Ricky Carioti/The Washington Post)

(e)merge: The fair positions 80 local, national and international galleries in the [Capital Skyline Hotel](#)'s guest rooms, which become temporary galleries -- and the swimming pool and patio area become a stage for performance art. This weekend only. Day passes \$15.

FotoBazaar: A giant, unjuried free photo exhibition pops up this for weekend only in NoMa, featuring more than 250 photographers.

RandallScottProjects: See Julia Fullerton-Batten's "[Unadorned](#)," which places Rubenesque models in contemporary still-life environments, as a commentary on body acceptance. The gallery is open Wednesday through Saturday. Free.

Flashpoint: Artist Gregory Thielker documents change along India's ancient Grand Trunk Road in drawings, text and sculpture in "[Highway](#)." Open Tuesday through Saturday. Free.

Connersmith: Artists Zoe Charlton and Wilmer Wilson IV explore issues of the body and cultural barriers in "[Festoon](#)" and "[Faust in the City](#)," their respective solo shows. Wednesday through Saturday. Free.