



ARTS ♦ ENTERTAINMENT ♦ LEISURE

Art Center Draws On New Artists

Torpedo Factory Visiting Artist Program welcomes 10 artists for summer.

BY DYLAN YEP
THE GAZETTE

For a brief time this summer, visitors can view a King Street “planet,” a two-dimensional landscape featuring the Washington Monument made from strips of magazine, mixed media paintings — from oils to acrylics to watercolors, and a number of other unique pieces in the studios of the visiting artists at The Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria.

Ten artists are being welcomed into a summer residence at the Torpedo Factory for the first time as part of the Visiting Artist Program. The purpose is to provide a professional development opportunity for emerging and experienced visual artists and to expose those visiting the Torpedo Factory to a rotating group of painters, sculptors, and others.

“We wanted to bring in some new people on a short-term basis to experiment with revitalizing the center with new works, new ideas,” said Sue Lynch, head of the Visiting Artist Program committee.



PHOTO BY DYLAN YEP

Erica Raby transforms post-consumer waste into different objects.

Craig Sterling, Visiting Artist Program committee member, added “We felt that to invigorate the center and to bring in new artists on a frequent basis would give the new artists an opportunity to show their work to the public as well as giving the public an opportunity to see new things.”

More than 50 artists from across the U.S. and as far away as South America applied to become a visiting artist. The 10 artists were chosen by juror Jack Rasmussen, director and curator of the American University Museum. Rasmussen was chosen by the Visiting Artist Program for his experience with many mediums and his reputation as a generalist. The artists are working in studios throughout the art center and will be actively involved in art enrichment events throughout the summer. In July, visiting artists David Alfuth, Megan Coyle, Corwin Levi, Julian Parker-Burns, Erica Raby, Kazaan Viveiros and Wan Ju-Wei will be exhibiting a variety of styles and in many different media.

The eclectic work of Corwin Levi of Alexandria can be described as mixed-media painting. He has worked in a variety of locations, including the Czech Republic and in New York. His travels do not allow him to stay in

one place for a long period of time so he appreciates the opportunity the Visiting Artist Program offers. “It’s great because at a normal artist residency you have a bunch of artists around, maybe some writers or composers, but here, you have so many different people from so many different areas of life who get to talk about art and you get to hear what they think. It’s very valuable ... there’s just so many people around who come to talk about art work with me or to not talk artwork with me.”

Megan Coyle of Alexandria creates textured collages of anything from portraits to landscapes with strips of magazines. She appreciates that the program is an excellent opportunity to make a name for herself in the art community, but also recognizes the benefits offered to the public. “It’s nice because it introduces a few new artists that people haven’t seen before if they come here a lot.” She added, “I can have a conversation with people when they see what I’m working on ... they can see the actual process while I’m working on it. Usually, people stumble upon my website and they see my finished works of art, but don’t really have an idea of how it’s

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PHOTO BY DYLAN YEP

Corwin Levi begins work on a series of flower paintings.



PHOTO BY DYLAN YEP

Wan-Ju Wei’s art is influenced by her upbringing in Taiwan.



PHOTO BY DYLAN YEP

Julian Parker-Burns works on one of his “planet” collages made from photographs and paintings.



PHOTO BY DYLAN YEP

Kazaan Viveiros’ paintings reflect her interest in evolution, ecology, ecosystems and environmental issues.



PHOTO BY DYLAN YEP

Megan Coyle creates a collage of the Washington, D.C., landscape made from magazine strips.

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pieced together.”

Erica Raby of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, works primarily with installations, sight-specific, 3-D works designed to transform the perception of a space, and drawings. While her works may appear cute and playful on the surface, she tries to infuse her art with a serious undertone through materials like post-consumer waste. Like Coyle, Raby sees the program as an opportunity for the public to “see the beginning stages of a piece of art and see materials before they get transformed. It can be a learning experience.”

Kazaan Viveiros of Alexandria typically creates her art in a small studio by herself. Her works feature animal and landscaped-based paintings to address environmental issues. She recognizes that the program allows “new blood, new ideas, and new techniques” to enter the Torpedo Factory, and that this experience will help her professionally.

Wan-Ju Wei of Allston, Mass., grew up in Taiwan and her background is reflected in her paintings. She focuses on the perception of shadow and uses it to convey ideas from both Eastern and Western thought. While the west often views shadows as a dark force, Wei believes shadows represent parts of her that are hidden and mysterious. Her beliefs are reflected in many of her paintings in which dark figures are surrounded by warm colors.

While many Alexandrians have enjoyed visiting the Torpedo Factory for years, they may not realize how those outside of the area view the art center located at the end of King Street along the Potomac River.

Julian Parker-Burns of Silver Spring creates mixed-media col-

lage that often combine painting and photographs to create surreal scenes. He has been living overseas for the past 10 years. “Every time I return to D.C., I always go by The Torpedo Factory. I’ve always thought that it is one of the greatest art sites in the world because you can meet with the artists and see all different kinds of art.” Living overseas, he has felt increasingly out of touch with the American art scene and saw the Visiting Artist Program as a great opportunity to rejoin it. He has been working at The Torpedo Factory since the beginning of June and finds the experience invaluable.

Parker-Burns explained what he believes are the key elements to being an artist at The Torpedo Factory: that there are other artists with which to discuss technical information; to be inspired by the work of others; and, for the professional standards that are practiced.

“The Torpedo Factory is perhaps one of the most important parts of Alexandria because it enables people from all around the world and perhaps more importantly everyone from Alexandria to come here, see the art that they love, and even better yet see the art they don’t understand and ask those artists ‘so why are you painting flowers in a vase?’ and have the artists explain why. I’m not asking the public to love flowers in a vase or big, black, abstract squares but that the public has a unique experience of expanding their mind, understanding other people and going boldly where most other communities don’t have a chance to go. Alexandria has that in the Torpedo Factory.”

THURSDAY/JULY 8

Project Trio. 7 p.m. Cost is \$10. Greg Pattillo, flutist; Eric Stephenson, cellist; and Peter Seymmour, bassist, perform an Open Master Class. At Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 321 S. Fairfax St., Alexandria.

Artists of the Year Opening

Reception. 6-9 p.m. Free. Torpedo Factory Art Center Artists of the Year, featuring the works of Marsha Staiger and Alison Sigethy. Sponsored by the Friends of the Torpedo Factory Art Center, Target Gallery, TFAC, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Visit www.torpedofactory.org; or call 703-838-4565.

Healthy Relationships Group. 3-4:30 p.m. Teen girls ages 13 and 17, are invited to join a group to talk about healthy relationships, self-esteem and more every Thursday for 6 weeks starting July 8 from 3pm - 4:30pm at Duncan Library. Contact Jennifer.Hemmick@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-5030.

Musician Eric Scott. 7 p.m. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Admission — prepay on line. For more information, contact 703-548-0035 or nvfaa.org.

Masters Seminar for Professional Theatre. 7 to 8 p.m. Sixteen Mount Vernon students have registered for the seminar which includes the performance of an original one act musical comedy. The performance is open to the public. For students ages 12-18. At Mount Vernon High School Theater, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road, Alexandria.

JULY 8-17

“Zero Hour.” Directed by Zina Bleck, featuring James E. Mitchell III. Set in theatre legend Zero Mostel’s painting studio on West 28th Street, a naive reporter attempts to interview the famously volatile artist, prompting an explosion of memory, humor, outrage and juicy backstage lore. July 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15/general; \$10/students, seniors. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. Information/Reservations: 703-615-6626.

JULY 9-11

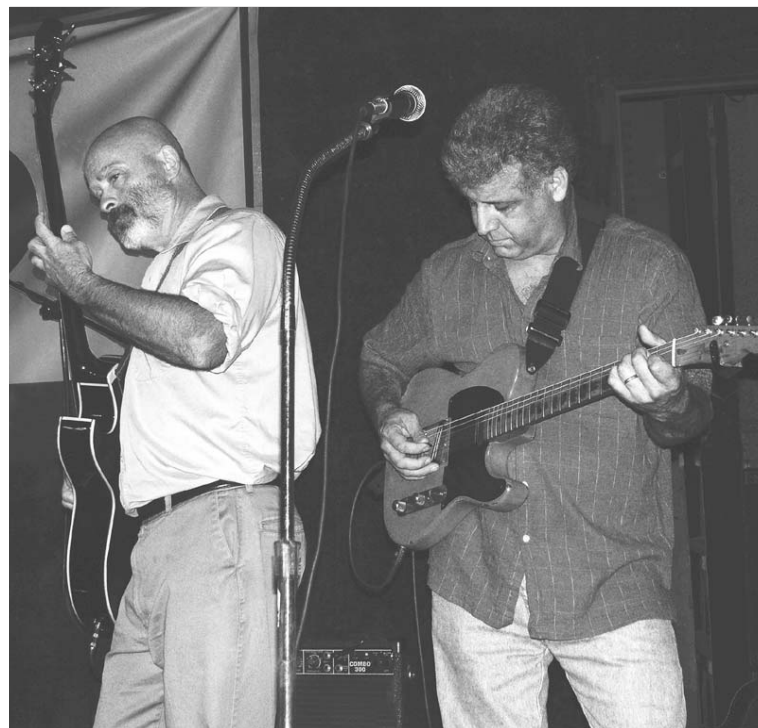
“The Hugging Saint.” Free. Mata Amritanandamayi Devi, a humanitarian and spiritual leader, or Amma as she is commonly known, will bless thousands. July 9 at 11 a.m.; 10 a.m. on July 10. Evening programs at 7:30 on the 10th; and 7 p.m. on the 11th. At the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center Hotel, 5000 Seminary Road, Alexandria. See www.ammadc.org or call the Amma information number at 240-696-1927.

FRIDAY/JULY 9

Chaka Khan Summer Concert. 7:30 p.m. “Live on the Plateau at National Harbor.” A 4,500 seat outdoor concert venue, complete with a covered stage. Ticket prices range from \$55-\$78 and are available through www.etix.com, by calling (800) 514-3849 or at the UPS store located - 145 Fleet Street, National Harbor.

Pietasters (Ska Band). 7:30 p.m. At Mount Vernon Nights in Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, in Alexandria. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances or call 703-324-SHOW (7469) for updates, and for weather cancellations after 6 p.m.

Project Trio Concert. 7 p.m. Greg Pattillo, flutist; Eric Stephenson, cellist and Peter Seymmour, bassist. Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 321



THURSDAY/JULY 15

Jim Stephanson and John Previti. 7-9 p.m. Free. Guitarist Jim Stephanson and bassist John Previti will treat visitors to an evening of blues, swing, and jazz inspired tunes. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565, www.torpedofactory.org.

S. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Cost is \$20; reception to follow. Call or email Rebecca Collaros: 202-686-8008, rcollaros@levineschool.org

“Inside North Korea.” 7 p.m. A National Geographic documentary film hosted by Lisa Ling (sister of detained American journalist, Laura Ling) presented and discussed by representatives of LINK (Liberty in North Korea.) Resistance, ideology, brainwashing, and survival all interwoven in the film. Chapel at the Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Donations accepted. Refreshments. 703-721-0595 or gpourchot@yahoo.com.

SATURDAY/JULY 10

Open House. Donate old shoes to Sole for Souls and receive a free health evaluation. At Fitness Together, 300 N. Washington St., Alexandria. Call 703-683-0777.

Annual USA & City Birthday Celebration. 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Free. The City of Alexandria will celebrate its 261st and the USA’s 234th birthday. At Oronoco Bay Park, 100 Madison St., on the Potomac River between Fairfax, Pendleton, and Madison Streets. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation or call 704-746-5418.

“Harlem’s Mart 125: The American Dream” Film Screening. 4:30 p.m. Free. Part of “Movies with a Mission.” At the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or call 703-746-4356.

U.S. Army Band. 6 p.m. Free. The 257th Army Band will perform patriotic music, marches and entertainment. At Oronoco Bay Park, Alexandria. Go to www.257armyband.com or call 202-685-7899.

Botany for Gardeners. 9:30-11:30 a.m. \$18. Enhance your ability to identify plants. Under Mary Olien’s guidance, we will use lectures and live samples to explore basic concepts of plant classification and plant anatomy, key elements in plant identification. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Call 703-642-5173 to register. Visit www.greenspring.org.

National Capital Daylily Show. Come in to see some unusual

varieties of these summer beauties. Their flower forms will dazzle you. Daylilies available for sale. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Call 703-642-5173 for more information. Visit www.greenspring.org.

Antigua and Barbuda Masquerade Symposium. 1 to 3 p.m. Free. The Alexandria Black History Museum and Kemet Technologies are presenting a panel discussion exploring the aesthetics of Jumbie in Caribbean Carnival celebrations. (“Jumbie” refers to a spiritual being in the likeness of a person who has died.) Call 703-746-4356 for reservations or more information. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org.

SUNDAY/JULY 11

Fest-Ability Picnic. 1-4 p.m. This annual event, sponsored by the Virginia Ability Alliance (VAA), provides fun, activities, information, and resources for northern Virginians with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. At T.C. Williams High School, 3330 King Street, Alexandria.

Kings Park Brass Ensemble. 7 to 8 p.m. Free. A concert in Ft. Hunt Park, six miles south of Old Town Alexandria on the GW Parkway, 703-289-2550 or www.nps.gov/gwmp and go to “News and Fun Things to do.”

Summer Chamber Music Series. 3 p.m. Free. Trombonist Kirsten Leis Warfield performing “The Electric Slide”, music for solo trombone with electronics and electrified trombone. At the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria.

Art Reception: Diane Frykman. 1-3 p.m. Diane Frykman holds an art reception for her show of oil landscapes and still life. Her work can be viewed at the Historic House of Green Spring Gardens from June 29-August 29. The House is open Wednesdays-Sundays from noon-4:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Call 703-642-5173 for more information. Visit www.greenspring.org.

Art Reception: Penny McGrath. 1-3 p.m. Penny McGrath holds an art reception for her show of oil landscapes and still life. Her work

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