

# Art breaks through the city limits

BY MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN

For some, the notion of art in the suburbs conjures up images of watercolor barns. Not that there's anything wrong with that. And there are plenty of galleries and shops that do cater to that home-spun aesthetic. † But the adventurousness of such places as the Arlington Arts Center and Artisphere — both of which are widely known for edgy contemporary exhibitions — has laid to rest the canard that there's no interesting art outside of the city. † It's not only in Arlington, however, that you can combine a run to Costco or Mr. Tire with a cultural outing. We scanned the map and rounded up 10 other cool suburban art spaces, from the nonprofit hole-in-the-wall to the college gallery to the regional art center. They're all worth a trip — whether you live downtown or just down the road.

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## Maryland

### 39th Street Gallery

3901 Rhode Island Ave., Brentwood.  
301-864-3890. www.39thstreetgallery.com.

This 450-square-foot micro-gallery is the more freeheeling neighbor to the Brentwood Arts Exchange and the Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center. The three modest exhibition spaces are housed in the Gateway Arts Center, a venture of the Gateway Community Development Corporation, which works to revitalize the communities of Brentwood, North Brentwood and Mount Rainier. The 39th Street Gallery, which opened nearly three years ago, has become known for tightly focused shows that are sometimes more conceptually, politically and sexually adventurous than one might expect to see in the suburbs.

The gallery has shown work by such up-and-comers as Patrick McDonough as well as the paintings and drawings of the late Manon Cleary, who is often said to have been Washington's finest figurative painter.

**ON VIEW:** "No Strings Attached." Mixed-media works by Delusions of Grandeur, a collective of five emerging African American artists. Through Feb. 23.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "Real and Remembrance." A group show contrasts paintings created through direct observation with paintings constructed from memory and



Joyce Zipperer's "Thirteen Inch Lure" sculpture will be featured in "Altered," an exhibition at BlackRock Center for the Arts.

imagination. Reception on March 9 from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Franklin's Restaurant, Brewery and General Store, 5121 Baltimore Ave., Hyattsville. 301-927-2740. www.franklinsbrewery.com.



### ON GOINGOUTGUIDE.COM/BLOG

See more images from these galleries and read the latest art news and reviews.



LEFT: For images such as "Untitled III," part of the "Network of Mutuality" exhibition at the Art Gallery at the University of Maryland, artist Ken Gonzales-Day combines sculptures from museums around the world to examine depictions of race.

ABOVE: The McLean Project for the Arts, now in its 51st year, has three galleries in its space in the McLean Community Center.

### King Street Gallery

930 King St., Silver Spring. 240-567-5821.  
www.montgomerycollege.edu/arts/ksa.

Located in a renovated bakery, the gallery at Montgomery College's Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus supports the school's art department. But non-students who have discovered this sleek art venue in downtown Silver Spring also are the beneficiaries.

In six short years, the gallery has become known for bold, thought-provoking work, including "Terraforming," a 2012 survey exhibition featuring landscape photographers who are taking the medium in unorthodox directions. Supplemented by the Open Gallery, a space reserved for smaller installations, King Street Gallery maintains a lively mix. Painting, photography and sculpture sometimes give way to graphic design and craft.

"We want students to see that there are many ways of working," says Megan Van Wagoner, chairman of the faculty committee that oversees the gallery's robust programming.

**ON VIEW:** Works by Montgomery College faculty and staff. Through Feb. 1.

**ON THE HORIZON:** Photos, drawings and sculptural installation by Jeffrey Abt on the theme of museum interiors and exhibition space. Reception on Feb. 21 from 6 to 8 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Pacci's Neapolitan Pizzeria, 8113 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring. 301-588-1011. www.paccispizzeria.com.

### The Art Gallery

1202 Art-Sociology Building, University of Maryland, College Park. 301-405-2763.  
www.artgallery.umd.edu.

What does it mean to be creative? That question is central to the mission of the University of Maryland's main art gallery, says director John Shipman, who notes that the most recent show was dedicated to the art of the music video.

One of five exhibition spaces on campus — including the sharply curated, jewelbox-like Stamp Gallery in the student union building — the Art Gallery supplements its annual showcase of art

students' thesis projects with diverse and frequently startling programming, including, in 2000, an exhibition of science-fiction illustration from the 1930s to present day.

**ON VIEW:** The gallery is currently dark.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "Network of Mutuality: 50 Years Post-Birmingham." Contemporary artists look at the history and legacy of the civil rights movement. Reception on Wednesday from 5 to 7 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Busboys and Poets, 5331 Baltimore Ave., Hyattsville. 301-779-2787. www.busboysandpoets.com.

### VisArts

155 Gibbs St., Rockville. 301-315-8200.  
www.visartsatrockville.org.

Curator Susan Main remembers when VisArts — founded in 1987 as Rockville Arts Place — was "in the middle of nowhere." Now occupying prime real estate in Rockville's Town Square, not far from its original location, the regional arts center is surrounded by bars, restaurants and shops. And, it houses three galleries, including a street-front space with big windows that is dedicated to experimental work.

ART CONTINUED ON 20

Greg Minah's "The Exact Limits" is part of the upcoming "Slow Dance With the Concept of Infinity" exhibition at Adam Lister Gallery.

### ART FROM 19

Main brings an artist's sensibility to VisArt's programming, which has included last summer's "scape," a brilliant group show that challenged the conventional notion of landscape as a way of making sense of the physical world.

**ON VIEW:** "Kenneth Martin: Sculpture and Casework." Through Feb. 16. On Feb. 3 at 2 p.m., the artist gives a gallery talk about his wooden sculpture and furniture.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "Mixtopias." Works by Joyce Yu-Jean Lee, Katherine Tzu-Lan Mann, Jennifer Tam, Mequitta Ahuja, Hayoon Jay Lee and others on the theme of hybridity. Reception on April 19 from 7 to 9 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Bob's Noodle 66, 305 N. Washington St., Rockville. 301-315-6668.

## Virginia

### Adam Lister Gallery

3950 University Dr., Fairfax. 646-263-7305.  
www.adamlistergallery.com.

Artist Adam Lister opened his eponymous gallery in 2009 because he wanted studio space. Well, that and a venue to show work he "connected" with.

With paint splatters on the floor, and typically handwritten wall labels, the place — which actually serves as studio and classroom space — has the unpolished feel of an alternative urban art space. This makes it all the more unlikely — and welcome — in the Old Town Fairfax Village Plaza, a shopping center with a Greene Turtle sports bar.

The gallery is open only seven hours a week, but it's worth seeking out for Lister's eye, which mixes edgy pop art with colorful abstraction that connects, unthinkingly, to the tradition of the Washington Color School.

**ON VIEW:** The gallery is currently dark.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "Slow Dance With the Concept of Infinity." Nine artists use painting, drawing, photography, installation and video to offer diverse perspectives on the infinite. Reception Feb. 9 from 2 to 4 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Bollywood Bistro, 3955 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax. 703-273-0031. www.bollywoodbistrofairfax.com.

### Athenaeum

201 Prince St., Alexandria.  
703-548-0035. www.nvtta.org.

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Virginia Fine Arts Association, the Athenaeum has a bit of a split personality. Part of the gallery's mission involves the preservation of its 1852 home, a former bank fronted by distinctive pink Doric columns. And the other part is to showcase contemporary art, which it does with frequent verve.

Not everything the gallery shows is cutting edge. Witness the current exhibition of paintings by Frances Seeger, whose traditional figurative pictures evoke early Picasso. But just wait a couple of months. This spring brings a group show organized around the medium of human hair, including works by several artists who embroider with it.

**ON VIEW:** "Frances Seeger: People." Through Feb. 24. Figurative works by the longtime local painter.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "Process Photography." A survey of photographic techniques, from iPhoneography to microscopy. Reception on March 3 from 4 to 6 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Virtue Feed & Grain, 106 S. Union St., Alexandria. 571-970-3669. www.virtuefeedandgrain.com.

### Greater Reston Arts Center

12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston.  
703-471-9242. www.restonarts.org.

This smallest but adventurous storefront in Reston Town Center, commonly known as GRACE, may not have the cachet of the museums on the Mall. But it does have something in common with

The Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton showcases a variety of work, from Nelson Gutierrez's "The Death of Fear" exhibition, above, to the "Eve of the Centennial" show, below, last fall in the McGuireWoods Gallery.

the Hirshhorn and the National Gallery of Art, says curator Hollis Koons McCullough, who came to her job here from a museum in Savannah, Ga. Like those downtown museums, there's outside space for a sculpture garden.

GRACE has drawn attention for dramatic organic indoor sculpture — Shinji Turner-Yamamoto's 2008 "Sleeping Tree" included a 25-foot dogwood on its side in the middle of the gallery — but the center has never taken advantage of the big park just outside its windows. McCullough's vision for the art space, which will turn 40 in 2014, includes public art in the green space, as well as a continuation of the kind of shows it has become known for: diverse contemporary work that celebrates the community while introducing that community to the rest of the world.

**ON VIEW:** "Winter Solos." Paintings by Beverly Ryan and photography by George Smyth. Through Feb. 23.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "How Familiar the Stranger." Large-scale paintings of dilapidated spaces by Philadelphia artist Morgan Craig. Reception on April 18 from 6 to 8 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Mon Ami Gabi, 11950 Democracy Dr., Reston. 703-707-0233. www.monamigabi.com.

### McLean Project for the Arts

1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean.  
703-790-1953. www.mpaart.org.

The McLean Project for the Arts' 50th-anniversary exhibition last year filled all three gallery spaces: the main Emerson Gallery, the smaller Atrium gallery and the Ramp Gallery along the walkway leading from the McLean Community Center lobby. The number of heavy hitters in the show was impressive — Yuriko Yamaguchi, Dan Steinhilber, Kendall Buster and 26 other local stars who have shown there the past half-century.

But MPA isn't resting on its laurels. The gallery showcases the art of the mid-Atlantic, but its aims are more ambitious. "We want to show the community what is art," says exhibitions director Nancy Sausser, "not just show the art of the community."

**ON VIEW:** "Small Stories." Modestly scaled, off-kilter narratives by painters Nora Sturges, Matthew Mann and Gregory Ferrand. Through March 2.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "Sprays, Dusts and Aerosols: A Chemical Revolution." Collaborative, mixed-media installation by sculptor David D'Orio and printmaker Henrik Sundqvist. Reception on April 18 from 7 to 9 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Bistro Vivant, 1394 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean. 703-356-1700. www.bistrovivant.com.

### Workhouse Arts Center

9601 Ox Rd., Lorton.  
703-584-2900.  
www.workhousearts.org.

Occupying the former prison space in Lorton, this sprawling arts campus includes eight buildings of artist studios, performance space and galleries. Known for frequent open houses, the center features regular events incorporating entertainment, food, workshops and art sales.

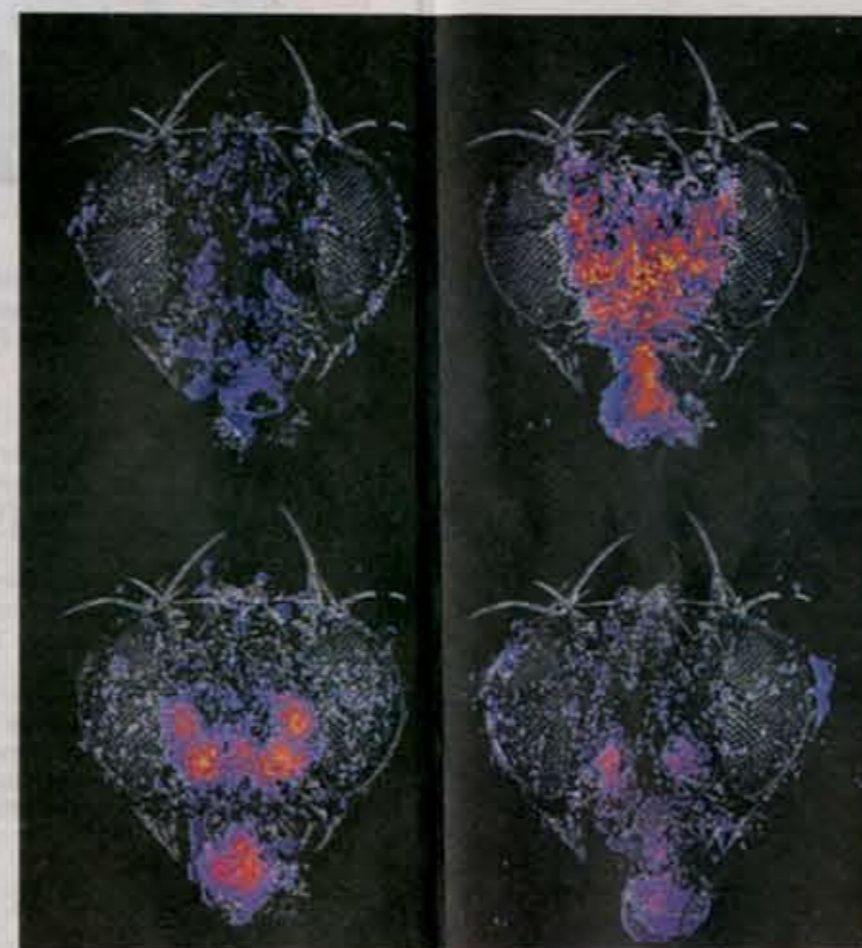
The overall aesthetic tends toward the traditional. Glass, ceramics and other crafts have a strong presence and a spring show will celebrate the cherry blossom. Still, there are enough surprises to keep even regular visitors on their toes. This summer, watch for the return of "Urban Decay," a showcase of graffiti-inspired art and other genres more associated with, say, D.C.'s Priddy than with a gallery in the middle of cow country.

**ON VIEW:** "Collectors Showcase 2013." Works by member artists. Through Feb. 23.

Opening reception on Friday from 6 to 8 p.m.

**ON THE HORIZON:** "Urban Decay 4." The annual roundup of lowbrow and street art. Reception on June 8 from 6 to 9 p.m.

**WHERE TO EAT NEARBY:** Madigan's Waterfront, 201 Mill St., Occoquan. 703-494-6373. www.madiganswaterfront.com.



Andrew Seeds's "Dirty Heads" is part of Athenaeum's upcoming exhibition "Process Photography." The image illustrates photographic process of microscopy.

CREDITS: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KEN GONZALES-DAY AT GALLERY; GREG STALEY/MCLEAN PROJECT FOR THE ARTS; ANDREW SEEDS AT ATHENAEUM; JOYCE ZIPPERER/BLACK ROCK CENTER FOR THE ARTS