

GreaterRestonArtsCenter

For immediate release

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CUT

December 9, 2016 – February 18, 2017

Reston, VA: Greater Reston Arts Center is pleased to present a thematic show of extraordinary works by six visual artists who are exploring spirituality, modern life, and ecological concerns through a variety of delicate and precisely crafted paper-cut pieces. The exhibition will provide a rich example of the endless possibilities derived from a medium as versatile as paper and will feature site-specific installations, quirky mix-media collages, humorous animations, scientific illustrations, and transformative sculpture. Featured artists are Ed Bisese, Maëlle Doliveux, Bhavna Mehta, Beverly Ress, Leslie Shellow, and Eric Standley.

CUT is the final exhibition in a trilogy of shows organized by the Greater Reston Arts Center examining labor-intensive, hand-manipulated, contemporary artworks made from humble materials traditionally associated with domestic craft. The 2014 exhibition *STITCH* presented surprising manifestations of needlework in combination with painting, sculpture, photography, and video. The 2015 exhibition *BEAD* featured works ranging from jewelry that mimics natural forms or incorporated live ammunition, to sculptural assemblages created from materials including hand-blown glass, animal skulls, and re-purposed mops, to two- and three-dimensional works exploring heady themes including identity, gender, race, and nature. *CUT* will link the long history of paper cutting as an art form connecting various customs that have evolved uniquely all over the world reflecting the traditions, folklore, and practices of society. Professional contemporary artists working with cut paper or stencils sometimes deliberately engage the history of their medium, but often, as will be reflected in this exhibition, they employ new techniques with scissors, x-acto knives, and laser-cutting machines to generate line, form, texture, and movement.

The opening reception for *CUT* will be held on Friday, December 9 from 6pm – 8pm. Greater Reston Arts Center will be open for visitors Tuesday – Saturday from 11am – 5pm December 9, 2016 through February 18, 2017. Except December 23 – January 2, 2017.

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Ed Bisese, resides in College Park, Maryland, and is an adjunct faculty member for the School of the Arts at George Mason University and at Montgomery College. Bisese has been a staple of the DC art scene for decades, best known for his dry, biting humor depicted through his peculiar paintings and collages. He has been a mentor, juror, and exhibiting artist featured in multiple area galleries, art centers and museums including the Katzen Center, at American University, and The Kreeger Museum in Washington, D.C. His bizarre representations of human characteristics through whimsical abstracted portraits often seem to reference a hidden narrative of complex emotions of angst, fear, lust and paranoia, while simultaneously inducing chuckles of laughter. Bisese will be creating several new works for this exhibition as well as displaying numerous small works that feature the artist's trademark cartoonish, hybrid animal-people. **Maëlle Doliveux**, is an award-winning French and Swiss illustrator who has lived all over the globe and is currently based out of New York City. Doliveux is a multi-faceted artist who excels in a variety of media including cut paper comics and animations. Her background is in architecture and with methodical practice she photographs her cut paper drawings as if they were "sets" with multiple lighting angles to communicate the three-dimensional aspects of paper. The exhibition will feature her *Pagan New York* animations, her subtle expressions, both humorous and grotesque, pay tribute to her experiences of life in New York City. Her works have been featured in The New York Times, Newsweek, The Boston Globe, Upright Citizens Brigade, and Seven Stories Press among others. Her work has recently garnered recognition at the Society of Illustrators and also been shown at the Korea Society of New York, the Monmouth Museum, and as part of the Society of Illustrators gallery at MoCCaFest. **Bhavna Mehta**, a warm, eloquent, and compelling Indian-born artist based out of San Diego, California, expresses her bountiful creativity through the exactness of large paper cut pieces and installation works. Mehta is a prolific artist who uses her background in engineering to create delicate and precise designs out of cut paper that are influenced by the folk art traditions of her heritage. Through her work she is able to speak a common language about cultural and personal associations reflecting upon concepts of environmental concerns and societal pressure. She learned papercutting at the Penland School of Craft and was one of the 2014 San Diego Art Prize Emerging Artist winners. Several of her painstakingly hand-cut designs from her *Modern Woman* and *Each One* series will be on display as well as her colorful installation *GUSH*, created from a 2015 Creative Catalyst Fund of The San Diego Foundation. The cascading flurry of paper patterns emerging from origami pipes suspended from the gallery ceiling will tell the story of a community ensnared in a five-year drought, but is still hopeful for a

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reemergence of vegetation. **Beverly Ress**, an artist residing in Silver Spring, Maryland, is an adjunct member of the Art Departments of both Catholic and Georgetown Universities, and a 2016 recipient of an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council, her 4th. She creates enigmatic works of biological specimens meticulously drawn from observation in the sanctuary of museums. Ress combines her soft color-pencil drawings with elements of cut paper that coil, float, and spiral off of the paper boundaries. The carefully cut shapes reference concepts derived from mathematics, physics, and research of flora and fauna, inspiring thoughtful contemplation of the universe, and the study of life and its cycles. Her drawings have been recently exhibited in solo shows at Stonybrook University on Long Island, Kentler International Drawing Space in Brooklyn, and the Katzen Arts Center in Washington, D.C.

Leslie Shellow, originally from Washington, D.C. and now a resident of Baltimore, Maryland, and adjunct faculty member at Maryland Institute College of Art, was a recent winner of the Individual Artist Award for Works on Paper from the Maryland State Arts Council. Shellow spends her free time traversing natural areas and investigating water-based ecosystems for inspiration. Through an intuitive process she makes expansive, mixed-media installations, with swirling layers of poured paint, delicate ink drawn patterns and hand-cut shapes referencing organic matter teeming with life. Appearing to grow from the walls, her works are abstract, but evocative of both microscopic and macroscopic world. Shellow has exhibited at The Delaware Center for Contemporary Art, the Silber Art Gallery at Goucher College, the King Street Art Gallery at Montgomery College, the National Institute of Health and the Fraser Gallery in Bethesda, Maryland, and Arlington Arts Center in Virginia.

Eric Standley, resident of Blacksburg, Virginia, is an Associate Professor of Studio Art, Foundations of Art, and Design Coordinator for the School of Visual Arts, at Virginia Tech, creates astoundingly complex, diminutive windows and temple-like structures inspired by geometry from Gothic and Islamic architectural ornamentation as “an attempt to capture a reverence for the infinite.” Each piece contains approximately two hundred layers of laser-cut colored paper; each layer is designed by Standley and painstakingly assembled by hand. Using the techniques developed in creating the windows and inspired by art history, engineering, literature, and mathematics, Standley has ambitiously created *Daphne*, a massive 17 foot sculpture incorporating cut paper temples integrated into the top of a fallen tree constructed from reclaimed wood from Virginia. This sculpture debuted recently at the Taubman Museum of Art, along with other works and he has been in numerous exhibitions worldwide, including the CODA Paper Art Biennial in the Netherlands and most recently solo exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Virginia Beach and at the Sharjah Museum of Art in the United Arab Emirates during the Islamic Arts

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Festival. He is represented by Victori + Mo in New York City, Marta Hewett Gallery in Cincinnati, and Koji Miyajima of Mediaforce, Japan and is currently at the Von Traditionell bis Modern exhibit at the Scherenschmitt Museum of Vreden, Germany.

Images:

Bhavna Mehta, *Modern Woman #8*, Lokta paper and mounted on Stonehenge paper, 30" x 22", 2011

Beverly Ress, *Float*, colored pencil, laser-cut, twisted, reattached, 30" x 22", 2015

Leslie Shellow, *Entanglements* (detail), acrylic ink on hand cut Yupo paper, 60" x 60", 2016

Eric Standley, *Arch 6.2*, cut paper, watercolor, 28" x 24" x 3", 2016

The Greater Reston Arts Center is dedicated to enriching community life by promoting involvement and excellence in the contemporary visual arts. Its gallery showcases exceptional emerging and established artists from the mid-Atlantic region and beyond; its GRACE Art program delivers art enrichment experiences in over 40 schools regionally, impacting over 20,000 students; and its annual Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival is among the top such events in the country. The Greater Reston Arts Center is always free and open to the public.

For more information please contact info@restonarts.org or (703) 471-9242.

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The Greater Reston Arts Center gratefully acknowledges the leadership of its Board of Directors and the support of its sponsors, members, and patrons. GRACE programs are supported in part by the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Arts Council of Fairfax County, and the Reston Community Center.

