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Front cover: Leigh Davis, still from *Inquiry Into the ELE* (detail), 2016–2019

# OVERLOOKED

July 13–August 31, 2019

Leila Abdelrazaq

Lorenzo Cardim

Larry W. Cook

Leigh Davis

Homie House Press

Helina Metaferia

Red Sand Project

Matt Storm

Julie Wolfe

## INTRODUCTION

Instead of drafting a traditional curatorial statement for this exhibition, the co-curators, Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) Executive Director and Curator Lily Siegel and Associate Curator and Festival Director Erica Harrison, sat down for a conversation about the exhibition and their intentions for the presentation. By openly sharing their thoughts in this more casual transcript, the hope is that you the viewer will be open to conversation as well.

**Lily Siegel:** Let's start at the beginning—Erica, you came across Red Sand Project and were trying to figure out a way to present their work at GRACE and turn the gallery into, not necessarily a place of activism but, an activated space.

**Erica Harrison:** Yes. I was attracted to the Red Sand Project because it is a beautiful action that makes you think. The idea is that by pouring this red sand onto the ground, into the cracks, and leaving them for others to find, it brings awareness to those individuals who may slip through the cracks, specifically in relation to human trafficking and exploitation. Just the action of pouring the sand seems so beautiful but at the same time a bit somber. It just made me think about how artists are inspired to create something beautiful from very difficult subjects that doesn't hit people over the head but helps them want to learn more.

**LS:** We started talking about this idea of bringing awareness through subtle actions and decided to start looking at artists who were working in a similar fashion, i.e., giving attention to issues and populations that are often "overlooked" and making a gentle offering to the viewer to enter that vulnerable space with them.

**EH:** Right. Looking at how artists use their work to bring attention to things that don't always get noticed.

**LS:** In many ways, that's what art is; it asks you to take the time and attention to notice. Art is never going to change the world, let's be honest, it does not have that power, but it can change the way people think about and approach ideas that can impact the ways of the world. Offering these subtle reminders to keep ideas in the forefront of your mind is really important. Don't just

look, see, pay attention. That's where we as curators can help. We can help people see.

These artists have all taken an action. They had an idea, they had a concern, and their act was to make an artwork. We are in a way taking an action by showing that artwork. What do we expect or hope that our viewers will do in response to this exhibition?

**EH:** The artists are allowing themselves to be vulnerable by investigating these themes. We are, in a different way, showing vulnerability by showing the work and making a selection. It leaves us exposed to criticism of who we chose to recognize and who is forgotten in this collection of inconvenient truths or uncomfortable situations. We've always said we have this fear of leaving somebody out. But, on the other side, this leaves room for our audience to be vulnerable and speak their truths, tell us who they think is being left out and what they care about. And maybe by sharing in the journey it makes it easier to find connections with others.

**LS:** Another thing that was important to us is presenting these ideas in a way that does not turn people off, make them want to look away, but instead to feel like there is/can be a positive empowered outcome.

**EH:** We asked all of the artists to respond to the question, "What inspired this particular work and how has it changed during the process of making and showing?" Really two questions, but what we wanted to know was, how can taking an action change one's perspective? Back to what you said earlier about art not changing the world but changing the way we think about things. That can be true for the artist and the viewer.

**LS:** Many of the artists stated that the work starts with something personal but in the end is intended to give voice to those who may not have opportunities to speak. They continually refer to themes of sight—seeing and being seen—and in-between spaces. And they also all talk about community.

**EH:** I think that is what we want our exhibition space to be, like an incubator, a safe place to see, and to be seen within a greater community or communities.

**Thank you to all of the artists and the visitors for participating in this experience together.** 5



## LEILA ABDELRAZAQ

Leila Abdelrazaq is a Palestinian author and artist born in Chicago and currently living in Detroit. Her debut graphic novel, *Baddawi* (Just World Books 2015) was shortlisted for the 2015 Palestine Book Awards and has been translated into three languages. She is also the author and illustrator of *The Opening* (Tosh Fesh, 2017) as well as a number of zines and short comics. Her short animated film *Still Born* (2018), was originally commissioned for the 2018 Palestinian Young Artist of the Year Awards exhibition. She received a BFA in Theatre Arts and a BA in Arabic Studies from DePaul University, and is currently pursuing an MA in Modern Middle Eastern & North African Studies at the University of Michigan.



Lorenzo Cardim, *Brazilian Woman—See You On the Other Side*, 2017



## LORENZO CARDIM

Lorenzo Cardim's multi-media practice is a commitment to making work that questions social and political structures. His works express themes of social injustice through sculpture, video, and performance. His work looks at how society perceives those who exist outside culturally dominant norms. Specifically, he is interested in how queers, people of color, and other minority groups question the status quo. Cardim was born in Brazil. His work has been featured nationally and internationally in museums, galleries, universities, and film festivals in San Francisco, Oakland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, Maryland, New York, and Milan. He received a BFA in Fine Arts from the Corcoran College of Art + Design and an MFA from California College of the Arts.



## LARRY W. COOK

Larry W. Cook explores ideas of Black identity, race relations, and community in his photography and video work. Cook is currently Assistant Professor of Photography at Howard University. He is an Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition 2019 Finalists, Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery; 2017 Trawick Prize Winner; 2016 Sondheim finalist; former Hamiltonian Fellow (2013-2015); and has been included in various group shows at Delaware Contemporary; Walters Art Museum; Baltimore Museum of Art; Hemphill Fine Arts; Katzen Arts Center; Galerie Myrtis; and Rush Arts Gallery. Cook has also had solo presentations at Hamiltonian Gallery, (e)merge art fair, Stamp Gallery, and Pleasant Plains Workshop. Cook had a series of videos screened at the National Gallery of Art, as part of the Black Cinema House project. He holds a BFA from Plattsburgh State University of New York and an MFA from George Washington University.



## LEIGH DAVIS

Leigh Davis creates multimedia work that is both deeply personal and anthropologically rich, navigating the complex line between voyeurism and empathy. Her work is designed to foster connection between viewers and community members, encouraging conversation about the aspects of humanity that keep us apart and bring us together. She has exhibited at Maryland Institute College of Art; Arlington Arts Center; California College of the Arts; and Dumbo Arts Center in Brooklyn, New York. Davis teaches courses at Parsons the New School for Design and works between Brooklyn, New York, and Washington, D.C. She holds a BFA in Photography from Savannah College of Art and Design and an MFA in Photography from Concordia University.



My first fromera was  
Experiencing a home  
plurality full apart

A Stability (asaid) I thought  
would last forever —  
- Turned upside down at the  
eye of 13

~~Drives~~  
~~Boiler~~  
~~To the~~

I lost home in every sense of the word  
And it took me a long time  
to find it again  
But I'm so glad I finally did —

## HOMIE HOUSE PRESS

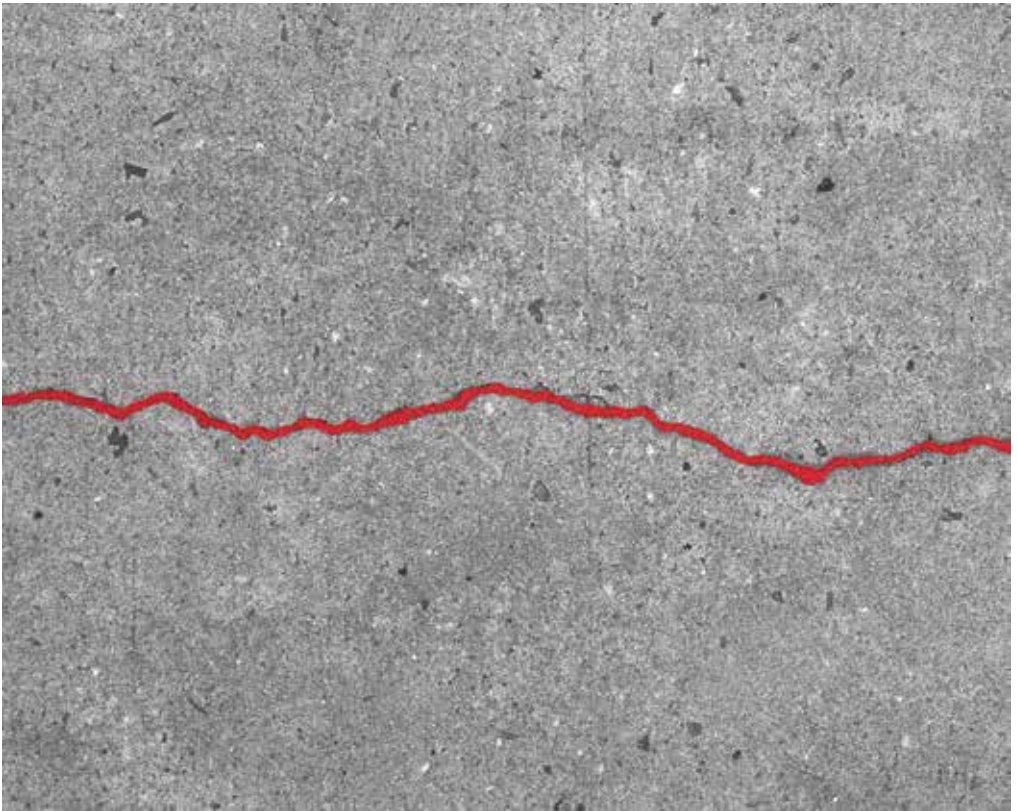
Homie House Press was founded by Adriana Monsalve and Caterina Ragg and is a skeleton bones crew of femmes creating and publishing in the photo book medium. They are photographers, book makers, and educators holding space for and with QTPOC artists and other underrepresented communities. Homie House Press are storytellers and visual communicators that produces in-depth stories on identity through the nuances in between.





## HELINA METAFERIA

Helina Metaferia is an interdisciplinary artist working in performance, video, installation, and collage. A large part of her creative inquiry is devoted to asserting the black body into sites of systemic oppression — including institutional spaces, art history, gentrified communities, or land marked by historic trauma. She has exhibited her work at venues including Museum of African Diaspora; Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; and Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit. She has taught in the BFA and MFA programs at the San Francisco Art Institute, Michigan State University, and Parsons Fine Arts. She is currently an Andrew W. Mellon Gateway Fellow/Assistant Professor at Brown University and lives and works in New York City. Helina holds an MFA from Tufts University's School of the Museum of Fine Arts.



## RED SAND PROJECT

Red Sand Project is a participatory artwork created by Molly Gochman that uses sidewalk interventions and earthwork installations to create opportunities for people to question, connect, and take action against vulnerabilities that can lead to human trafficking and exploitation. Participatory actions have taken place in all 50 states and in 70 countries around the world.



## MATT STORM

Matt Storm is a photo-based artist, making photographs, performances, installations and sculptures in Washington, D.C. Storm's work engages with the theme of identity, and the question "who are we, and how do we know?" He approaches this question through self-portraiture, and visual topics including transgender and queer issues, family, and community. His work has been exhibited in solo and group shows in Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington, D.C. Storm serves on the leadership team of the LGBTQ Caucus of the Society for Photographic Education. He holds a BA in Studio Art and East Asian Studies from Dartmouth College.



Julie Wolfe, *Seeing Again*, 2019

## JULIE WOLFE

Julie Wolfe is a visual and conceptual artist living and working in Washington, D.C. Her work is conceived by harvesting data, discarded objects and images that create a new narrative in the context of ecological environment and social/cultural evolution. Wolfe's work is featured in institutions and collections internationally and has been reviewed in *ARTnews*, *BBC America*, and *Hyperallergic*. Her work has been exhibited at Hemphill Fine Arts; The American University; Washington Project for the Arts; and Kunstraum Tapir in Berlin. She holds a BFA in Painting and Art History from The University of Texas.

# EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

## **Leila Abdelrazaq**

*Still Born*, 2018

Video

04:03

Courtesy of the artist

## **Lorenzo Cardim**

*Limp Wrist*, 2016

Wood and nail polish

20 x 20 x 20 inches

*Brazilian Woman – See You On the Other Side*, 2017

Wood, nail polish, and gold

23 x 26 x 8 inches

Courtesy of the artist

## **Larry W. Cook**

*Untitled #1*, 2014

Single-channel video

02:57

Courtesy of the artist

## **Leigh Davis**

*Inquiry Into the ELE*, 2016-2019

HD video

21:45

Courtesy of the artist

## **Helina Metaferia**

*The Call*, 2019

Single-channel video

17:05

Courtesy of the artist

## **Homie House Press**

*First Fronteras*, 2019

Featured artists: Ayobami Adeyemo, Martha Cecilia Afanador, Olivia Agostini, Martha Agostini, Erica Ariza, Komi Attivor, B. Barbou, Stef Bernal-Martinez, Antonious Bui, William Camargo, Giorgia De Santi, Camila González Simon, Cristóbal Guerra Naranjo, Vanja Horonic, Carmen Johns, Andy Johnson, Hazwani Manaff, Emmanuelle Marechal, Veronica Melendez, Rudy Monsalve, Adriana Monsalve, Kevin O'Meara, Monica Pedraja, Anjali Pinto, Caterina



Rigg, Dirar Tafecche, Margot Terc, Giulia Testori, Angel Thompson, Aden Weisel  
Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

**Red Sand Project**

Toolkits, 2014–present  
Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

**Matt Storm**

*02, Settling In*, 2017  
*06, Self Portrait with Butch Socks*, 2017  
*08, Holding a Bridge*, 2017  
*11, Face Stand with Dirty Feet*, 2017  
*15, Resting on Myself*, 2017  
*16, Holding My Space*, 2017  
*17, Crossing my Fingers, Getting Away With*,  
2017  
*18, Still Moving*, 2017  
*19, My V*, 2017  
All from the series *Act of Looking I*  
Archival dye prints  
13 x 19 inches

*10, M for M* from the series *Act of Looking II*, 2018  
Archival dye print on fabric  
13 x 19 inches

Courtesy of the artist

**Julie Wolfe**

*Seeing Again*, 2019  
Archival pigment prints and ink on paper  
18 ½ x 15 inches

## INTERESTED IN TAKING ACTION? HERE IS A LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE IN NEED OF SUPPORT.

Assisting Families of Inmates	<a href="http://afoi.org">afoi.org</a>
Bethany House	<a href="http://bhv.org">bhv.org</a>
Central American Resource Center	<a href="http://carecencd.org">carecencd.org</a>
Clean Fairfax	<a href="http://cleanfairfax.org">cleanfairfax.org</a>
Chesapeake Bay Foundation	<a href="http://cbf.org">cbf.org</a>
Cornerstones	<a href="http://cornerstonesva.org">cornerstonesva.org</a>
DC Coalition to End Sexual Violence	<a href="http://dcesv.org">dcesv.org</a>
DC Urban Greens	<a href="http://dcurbangreens.org">dcurbangreens.org</a>
Futures without Violence	<a href="http://futureswithoutviolence.org">futureswithoutviolence.org</a>
Martha's Table	<a href="http://marthastable.org">marthastable.org</a>
Men Can Stop Rape	<a href="http://mcsr.org">mcsr.org</a>
NV Rides	<a href="http://nvrides.org">nvrides.org</a>
O.A.R	<a href="http://oarnova.org">oarnova.org</a>
Peaceful Families	<a href="http://peacefulfamilies.org">peacefulfamilies.org</a>
Polaris Project	<a href="http://polarisproject.org">polarisproject.org</a>
Shelter House	<a href="http://shelterhouse.org">shelterhouse.org</a>
The Trevor Project	<a href="http://thetrevorproject.org">thetrevorproject.org</a>
Women Giving Back	<a href="http://womengivingback.org">womengivingback.org</a>

The mission of the Greater Reston Arts Center is to enrich community life by promoting involvement and excellence in contemporary visual arts.

We gratefully acknowledge the leadership of our Board of Directors and the valued support of our sponsors, members, and patrons.

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