

t r a n s f o r m e r

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t r a n s f o r m e r MARKS 10TH ANNIVERSARY AT 9TH SILENT AUCTION & BENEFIT PARTY
Tickets now on-sale for November 30th event!

*A catalyst and advocate for emergent expression in the visual arts – locally, nationally and internationally –
t r a n s f o r m e r commemorates 10 years of influential leadership.*



WASHINGTON, D.C. – This month, Washington, D.C.-based **Transformer** will toast to **10 years** of evolving the visual arts – locally, nationally, and internationally – at its **9th Annual Silent Auction & Benefit Party** on November 30. The first arts organization in D.C. dedicated to connecting and supporting emerging artists, the non-profit was founded in 2002 and has grown into a visionary leader and stimulus for experimental art.

Partnering with artists, curators, and cultural institutions, Transformer acts as an advocate for emergent expression in the visual arts through programs and services designed to educate artists about opportunities for sustainability while developing an audience through promotion and exposure. Transformer strengthens the creative community by acting as an epicenter for artists, collectors, curators, and supporters as exhibitions, programs, and events connect the community around artistic display and discourse.

“Transformer has established relationships with hundreds of artists and cultural partners over the past decade and, thanks to the dedicated staff, board and donors, we have launched the careers of countless artists,” said Victoria Reis, co-founder, executive & artistic director. “Transformer plays a vital role in the arts community and will continue to expand its impact in D.C., and beyond, in the years ahead.”



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Founded by Reis and Jayme McLellan (current director of Civilian Art Projects) in the summer of 2002 to profile progressive work by up-and-coming artists of all ages and backgrounds, "Transformer has steadily made its mark on the D.C. arts scene...the emphasis is on change and freedom, diverse voices and new artistic mediums for expression." (*The Washington Post*)

Transformer creates innovative collaborations with large cultural institutions and regularly collaborates with the diplomatic community. At the 8th Annual Silent Auction & Benefit Party, the Honorable Kim Beazley, Australian Ambassador to the U.S., said: "Transformer is a daring and exciting organization highlighting artists' ideas and experimentation. Working close to the creative coalface, this nimble organization has a mission to strengthen community by supporting emerging artists in their development."

Transformer reinforced its leadership role by an immediate response to the December 2010 Smithsonian censorship of David Wojnarowicz's *A Fire in My Belly* – earning the organization international notoriety. Transformer boldly countered the decision to de-install the Wojnarowicz film from the National Portrait Gallery's *Hide/Seek* exhibition by presenting a 48-hour storefront screening of an edited version of the work.

"The Transformer demonstration garnered national press attention and engaged thought leaders in a critical conversation about censorship and a reprise of the Culture Wars debate," Reis said. "The role Transformer assumed in the controversy renewed our commitment to supporting artists and their freedom of expression."

The *Washington CityPaper* published: "The first organization to make sure the artwork was seen was D.C.'s own Transformer. The nonprofit's executive and artistic director Victoria Reis and board chair James Alefantis had a copy of *A Fire in My Belly* playing from the Logan Circle gallery's window on Dec. 1, the day after Secretary Clough removed the work from the National Portrait Gallery. Other institutions followed suit, including the New Museum, the Tate Modern (in London), and PPOW Gallery, which represents

Wojnarowicz's estate." (Kriston Capps, November 11, 2011)



Recognized as a leader in the arts field, in March 2005, Transformer was selected to participate in the Warhol Initiative, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Art's national capacity-building grant program for visual arts organizations. Transformer joined Stage II of the Initiative, geared

at supporting relatively young organizations that operate on modest budgets and regarded as "the next generation of artist spaces."

With an eye to the future, Transformer recently announced that its FlatFile collection will be available for purchase online in 2013.

"Seeking to further increase audience and collectors for the participating artists, while also creating a sustainable new earned income stream for the organization, Transformer will be creating online sales of works from our FlatFile collection in 2013 through our website transformerdc.org," Reis said.



TRANSFORMER PROGRAMS

Launched in 2002, the **FRAMEWORK Panel Series** engages artists, professionals, cultural leaders, and audiences in conversation to create an oral "field guide" to encourage individual artists and educate audiences through the sharing of best practices.

In 2010, the **FRAMEWORK Panel Series** garnered Transformer's first National Endowment for the Arts'

Access to Artistic Excellence grant, awarded "to encourage and support artistic excellence, preserve our cultural heritage, and provide access to the arts for all Americans." As a result of the support, Transformer extended the scope of the series to include national perspectives within the contemporary visual arts. Transformer received NEA support for the series in 2011, and again in 2012.

The **FlatFile** program showcases works in a variety of two-dimensional mediums including photography, painting, drawing and printmaking approximately 16" x 20" in size and smaller. Currently featuring works by regional, national and international emerging artists, the program is open to both artists that have exhibited with Transformer in the past and those who are new to Transformer.

Works are available for viewing and purchase at Transformer's gallery space on an on-going basis, and are included in art fairs and traveling exhibitions, including the recent internationally touring **ALPTRAUM!** exhibition.

Since 2004, **Exercises For Emerging Artists**, a peer critique and mentorship program, has entailed an intensive series of meetings at Transformer for selected participating artists to meet, discuss and present a

new body of work at the gallery space. Spanning several months, artists work with Transformer's advisory council and staff, guest curators, and arts professionals to gain insightful feedback on the artistic process.

Understanding that informed audiences will help grow a more vital place for contemporary art in DC, in 2007, through the generosity of leading DC contemporary art collectors, Transformer launched the **Collector's View Series**, an annual spring program that invites audiences into the homes of Washingtonians for personal "views" of a diverse range of private art collections. Participants learn – from an insider's perspective – about the motivations, interests and passions of dynamic collectors, and the important relationship between artists, galleries, museums, and collectors. Last spring's fifth Collector's View series was supported by J.P. Morgan.

9th ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION & BENEFIT PARTY

The Ambassador of Spain, His Excellency Ramón Gil-Casares, the Transformer Board and Auction Host Committee invite guests to an evening of artistic exploration and celebration on **Friday, November 30** from **8 p.m. to 11 p.m.** at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design. Auction attendees will enjoy savories, sweets, and drinks by many of D.C.'s finest restaurants, as well as music by DJs Yellow Fever and special guests.

Featuring more than 160 artworks by local, national, and international emerging and established artists, the Auction will provide new and experienced collectors with a unique opportunity to purchase exceptional work by respected artists, selected by a nominating committee of curators, artists, and arts professionals.

The 2012 Auction Artist Nominating Committee includes: Geoffrey Aldridge, Artist; Tim Doud, Artist and Associate Professor of Art at American University; Chandi Kelley, Artist and Founder/Administrator of Project Dispatch; Akemi Maegawa, Artist and Founder of Anaba Project; Isabel Manalo, Artist and Director of The Studio Visit; Sarah Newman, Curator of Contemporary Art at the Corcoran; Danielle O'Steen, Independent Curator and Critic; Jose Ruiz, Artist, Curator, and Founder of Futhermore; Sheldon Scott, Artist, Activist, and Curator; Jay Stuckey, Artist; as well as Transformer's staff and Board of Directors.

Highlighting Transformer's mission to connect and



promote D.C.-based emerging artists with peers based nationally and internationally, Transformer is pleased to feature artists from the Embassy of Spain's professional network SPAINRED in the Auction this year.

Providing essential support for Transformer's dynamic year-round programming, exhibitions, and services, the Silent Auction & Benefit Party is one of the most popular and stylish events of the fall arts season in D.C. – attended by a diverse and colorful crowd of artists, collectors, gallerists, entrepreneurs, and arts enthusiasts.

Advance ticket purchase is required at <http://transformerauction2012.eventbrite.com>.

For more information, visit www.transformerdc.org.

Transformer's 2012/2013 Exhibition Series and programs are supported by: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The CrossCurrents Foundation, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/ NEA, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts' Access to Artistic Excellence Award, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer – individual donors, members of our Annual Auction Host Committee, and Corporate Sponsors.

Images of selected works in the 2012 Auction (banner at top, left to right):

Andrew Kozlowski, Bag, 2010; Veronika Marquez, Camila (self portrait), 2010; Ryan Hill, Untitled (Detail), 2012; Akemi Maegawa, Spring Daruma, 2012; Maggie Michael, Library of Congress Series: ~~Sacred and Undeniable~~ Self-Evident (Thomas Jefferson's edits to The Declaration of Independence), Green Crescent, 2012.

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