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FRAMEWORK Panel #17: *Gentrification – Good? Bad? Indifferent?*

June 9, 2012; 3:30-5pm

Gateway Center at Wardman Court
14th & Clifton Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(use 14th Street Entrance)

Developed & presented in collaboration with
Artspace DC and Pleasant Plains Workshop,
in tandem with the exhibitions *In Our Hood*
and *Sean Lynch: Bandits in the Ruins*.

Reception for *Sean Lynch: Bandits in the
Ruins* at Transformer to follow Panel, 6-8pm.

Transformer is proud to present FRAMEWORK Panel #17: *Gentrification – Good? Bad? Indifferent?* in tandem with *Sean Lynch: Bandits in the Ruins*, Sean Lynch's first US solo exhibition taking place at Transformer June 9 – July 7, and *In Our Hood*, a multi-venue exhibition presented by Pleasant Plains Workshop and Artspace DC May 18 – June 30.

Expanding on issues of gentrification and its relationship to disappearing histories & landscapes as explored in the collaborating organizations' exhibitions, the participating panelists – **Lydia DePillis**, journalist, reporter behind Washington City Paper's *Housing Complex* blog; **Cannon Hersey**, photographer, writer, and producer, featured in *In Our Hood*; **Sean Lynch**, visual artist; **Sylvia Robinson**, Executive Director of the Emergence Community Arts Collective (ECAC) – will discuss the shifting cultural histories & value systems that gentrification affects at local, national, and international levels. The panel will be moderated by **Kristina Bilonick**, Founder and Director of Pleasant Plains Workshop, and **Melissa Matthews**, Artspace Coordinator at Artspace DC, with introductions by **Victoria Reis**, Co-Founder, Executive & Artistic Director, Transformer.

Questions for discussion will include:

- *How does knowing the histories of our neighborhoods affect the way we interact with our locales?*
- *Is it possible to counteract negative effects of commercialization, globalization, and gentrification, and if so, how?*
- *What kinds of impacts do artists have on the communities they work in?*

Following an hour of moderated conversation, the moderators will open up the conversation via questions and answers between panelists and audience.

ABOUT THE PANELISTS:

Lydia DePillis is a staff writer at the *Washington City Paper*, where she covers real estate, transportation, housing, the economy, and the environment. She's originally from Seattle, and graduated from Columbia College in 2009, when she came to the District for internships at *Slate* magazine and *The New Republic*. She lives in Columbia Heights.

Cannon Hersey is committed to connecting art and the public in unique and unexpected ways. Mr. Hersey works as an artist, a social activist, cultural fire starter and sustainability innovator. Cannon has exhibited at numerous

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institutions and galleries including Lincoln Center, Collection of Joachim Esteve, MoCADA, White Box, Sundharam Tagore Gallery, NYU, Gregory Clark Collection, Vassar College, Earth Pledge Foundation, Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art, Stevens Institute of Technology and the Johannesburg Art Foundation. Hersey conceived and founded CrossPathCulture (CPC) in 1999, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting global community building through the arts. As Executive Director of CPC, he organized and produced more than 50 exhibitions, festivals and educational programs in conjunction with other non-profit organizations including P.S.1, Museum of Modern Art, Lincoln Center of Performing Arts, Whitebox, d.u.m.b.o. arts center, Imagenation, South African Consulate, and the Public Theater in the US; the Market Theater, the Johannesburg Metropolitan City Council, the Gauteng Department of Cultural Affairs, Brazilian Embassy in South Africa; and the Sao Paulo Bienale, Octavio and G-Onze in Brazil.

Sean Lynch (b.1978, Kerry, Ireland) is a visual artist. He studied fine art at the Stadelsschule, Frankfurt am Main. In recent years his artworks has been exhibited at the Camden Arts Centre, London, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, neugerriemschneider, Berlin, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt am Main and Limerick City Gallery of Art, amongst others. This is his first solo exhibition in the United States. He is represented by the Kevin Kavanagh Gallery, Dublin, is a lecturer on MAVIS, MA in Visual Art Practices, IADT, Dun Laoghaire, and also an active author and editor of several publications on Irish art. Currently he is a participant at the Gasworks International Residency Programme, London. Further information and downloads at www.seanlynchinfo.com.

Sylvia Robinson was raised on Quincy Street, NW and returned to the area in 2002 to create an arts and community center. Her experiences working in for-profit and non-profit organizations have led Ms. Robinson to approach community development in innovative and creative ways. In 2003 she founded the Emergence Community Arts Collective (www.ecacollective.org) after renovating a historically significant building at 733 Euclid St. NW. Ms. Robinson is a co-founder of the Georgia Avenue Community Development Task Force and a founding member of Diverse City Fund (www.diversecityfund.org).

ABOUT THE MODERATORS:

Kristina Bilonick is a native Washingtonian who uses screen printing, video, and other media to create art installations that are often interactive. She has shown her work at local art spaces including Transformer, Honfleur Gallery, and Gallaudet University and has curated and co-curated exhibitions at DC Arts Center, Artisphere, and Civilian Art Projects. After studying printmaking and painting at the University of New Hampshire, Bilonick returned to DC where, in addition to her studio practice, she has worked as an arts administrator for over ten years – running programs at organizations including the Washington Glass School, DC Arts Center and most recently at Washington Project for the Arts. In 2010, Kristina opened Pleasant Plains Workshop – which functions as a shared art studio, project space, and shop located on Georgia Avenue in Northwest DC.

Melissa A. Matthews, Director of Artspace DC - a 13 year old arts education studio and exhibition space serving the Shaw neighborhood of Northwest Washington D.C. is an artist and arts administrator from Brooklyn, NY. Melissa earned a degree in painting from Howard University. She co-founded and served as CEO and curatorial director at More Black Art, Inc., an artist's services organization based in Brooklyn, NY from October 2008 - January 2012. Lead designer and sole-proprietor of MamItdart (Mam-limited-Art) Brand- a catch all art endeavor that includes arts administration consulting, freelance illustration, curating, and fashion design for the past eight years, Melissa uses all of her experience as both an artist and administrator to benefit her consulting clients including Artspace.

ABOUT OUR PANEL HOST VENUE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATORS:

Artspace DC engages youth and adults in workshops and community-based arts projects that help transform and empower individuals and the neighborhood. Artspace DC is a multicultural gathering place for practicing artists and beginners to develop the creativity that abides within every person and place. Artspace DC provides an affordable avenue for artists to express themselves, share and gather skills, create economic opportunities and find fellowship with each other while adding significant value to the renewal of the Shaw neighborhood.

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Founded in November of 2010, **Pleasant Plains Workshop** is a studio space, classroom, gallery, and shop that specializes in showcasing work by DC-based artists. The gallery space features a rotating line-up of emerging artists, and the shop offers handmade gifts, books, prints, and zines. The Workshop hosts a number of events throughout the year including poetry readings, performance art, charettes, trunk shows, and classes for small groups and individuals. For more information, visit: www.pleasantplainsworkshop.com.

Launched in December 2002, **Transformer's FRAMEWORK Panel Series** engages artists, arts professionals, cultural leaders, and audiences in conversation to create an oral 'field guide' to encourage and support individual emerging artists in our community and educate audiences through the sharing of best practices within the contemporary visual arts. Transformer's 2011/12 FRAMEWORK Panel Series is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts' Access to Artistic Excellence grant, "to encourage and support artistic excellence, preserve our cultural heritage, and provide access to the arts for all Americans".

Image Credit: *Sean Lynch, Latoon*, Digital Betacam video transferred to DVD, 8:30 min, 2006

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Transformer's 2011/2012 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 Robert Lehman 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.