

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

Art Exhibit Transforms the definition of “Fiber Art”

FIBER OPTICS @ 1310 Gallery

Curated by Lisa Rockford

1310 SW 2nd Ct., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

Exhibition Dates: September 21 – October 11, 2013

Opening Reception: Sat. September 21, 7-10pm

Second Reception/ ART FALLOUT Event: Sat. October 5th, 5-9pm

Closing Reception & Awards: Fri. October 11, 7-9pm

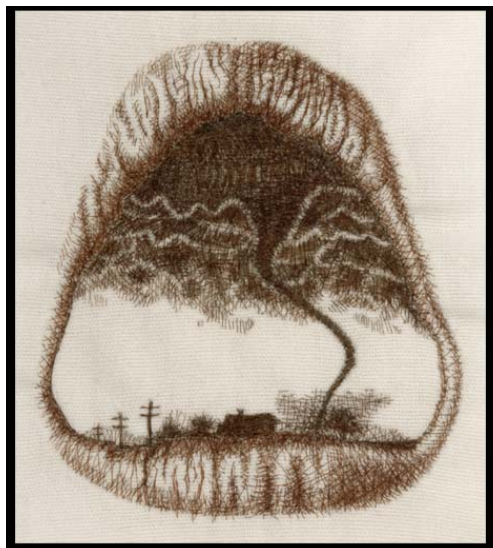
Admission: Free & Open to the Public

“Fiber Optics” is a comprehensive group exhibition of 42 emerging artists that exemplify fresh, innovative approaches to “fiber art.” The artists selected have reinvented traditional craft processes such as embroidery, crochet, knitting, weaving, sewing, and quilting. Rather than follow prescribed methods, they merge traditional craft with sculpture, installation, and video art; and utilize unexpected materials that transcend their banal origins with integral symbolism. Though the approaches are unconventional, technique, precision, and aesthetic appeal are still at the core of their processes.

Jerry Bleem, and Doerte Weber resourcefully recycle unexpected materials for their crochet and weaving. At first glance, the work may look like a blanket or traditional tapestry. Bleem uses postconsumer plastic bags as his yarn, drawing connections to the plastic’s origins in the oil industry, and accentuating the pointless mass of plastic waste that streams through our daily lives. Doerte Weber



also makes use what would normally become trash; in this case, the color-saturated plastic bags that encase her daily *New York Times* newspaper deliveries. The commercial material becomes a great juxtaposition with her use of the most traditional, historic patterns for weaving.



Kate Kretz replaces thread with hair in her embroidery. The stitches are often so minute, that the work could be best viewed under a microscope. Her imagery, which often hints at violence, is in direct contrast to the delicate stitches.

The creations **Kelly Boehmer** establish a more visible sense of violence. Like a mad scientist, she dismantles and stitches together stuffed animal parts and other found soft fabric elements, even utilizing taxidermy, and letting her creatures “guts” spill out in a full spectrum of color.

Lisa Rockford’s embroideries at first glance seem to be abstract, but are in fact, each are a microscopic map of part of her body. To capture images for this series, she used an endoscopic camera, (which magnifies by 100 times) to photograph spider veins in her legs. She then recreated the images stitched into cowskin, a material intentionally chosen for its irony.

Amy Gross creates work that is an absolute contrast to her last name, creating stunning fabrications of the natural world, inspired by her fascination with symbiosis. Her assemblages look as if they were transported directly from the most exquisite rainforest, but in actuality involve sewing, applique,



embroidery thread, paint, beads, oil pastel, and wax. Amy explains, *“I mimic the quickly changing natural world through man-made materials with a longer shelf life, an attempt, though illusory, to slow change, to consider and to hold on to life longer.”*

Brother and sister John & Caroline Collette are also inspired by nature, but in this case, the nature of the mind. They will create an interactive installation, visually incorporating knit neurons with helmets that are meant to be worn by participants. The headpiece will scan their brain-waves and light up, causing the viewer to control, and become part of the artwork.

Instead of knit by hand, **Martin Casuso** creates his own mass production of knit fabrics for his sculptural installations, using a vintage toy knitting machine that was originally designed to introduce young girls into domestic skills. Martin will create site specific installation for this exhibit, inspired by the gallery architecture.



Jonathan Rockford has used crocheted objects as the ephemeral prop in documented performances, which are lasting works as videos.

In his artist statement, Jonathan Rockford explains the complexity intrinsic to his process:

“I see sculptural crochet as a type of continuous line drawing rendered in three-dimensions. Yet, when you look closely at the physical structure of each form, a cellular or pixilated network emerges through



the repeated details of every stitch. Tension becomes an important structural component, and each stitch becomes a signifier for a particular moment in time. In this way, ideas of time, line, growth, structure, memory, and connection are inherent in every crocheted piece that explores the boundaries between the physical and the digital."

Melissa Bush & Shawna Munro use traditional, labor intensive needlepoint & crochet processes, but instead of pretty pictures, offer messages that have gloomier subtext. Shawna examines the text from her mother's obsessive collection of romance novels, while Melissa pairs the nostalgic process of



crochet with a chilly script of repressed memories from her childhood traumas. Melissa states: *"My longing for family and tradition have fueled my performances, digital renderings and artifacts into composites that simulate the lost memories of my identity and nationality. The repetitive movements and tactile process of crochet and other traditional craft mediums provide a Sisyphean approach to an endless meditative process of making objects. This process of making objects is more significant than the artifact itself."*

In contrast, **Kevin Curry's** substantial architectural installation (15'Wide x 10'Deep x 13'High) entitled 'Housewarming,' acts as a protective shelter that a viewer can walk inside of for respite. Kevin draws a connection between the warm feelings, familial connection, and sensation of "safety" a quilt can offer.



The opening night will include two performances, ongoing throughout the evening, by Belaxis Buil, and Karelle Levy, who will both mantle themselves with their knitted and sewn fabric installations.

There will be at least \$750 in cash prizes, in addition to great exposure for artists. Several guest judges, comprised of gallerists, art collectors, and art critics will attend the exhibit and vote for their favorite artworks. The artists with the most votes will win the prizes.

Confirmed 2013 GUEST JUDGES:

- **Shana Beth Mason, Critic**
- **Noor Blazekovic, Founder, IRREVERSIBLE Magazine**
- **Kelli Bodle, Assistant Curator, Boca Raton Museum of Art**
- **Jim Drain, Internationally renowned Artist**
- **Rochi Llana, Curator & Gallerist**
- **Doug McCraw, Founder of FAT Village Arts District & Art collector**
- **Marisa J Pascucci, Curator of 20th Century Contemporary Art, Boca Raton Museum of Art**
- **Samantha Rojas, Swan Communications**
- **Helmut Schuster, Galerie Schuster Berlin/Miami**
- **Mindy Shrago, CEO, Young At Art Museum**

There will be a special reception on Oct. 5, as part of the 4th Annual ART FALLOUT Event. ART FALLOUT is a collaboration between Girls Club Art Collection, 1310 Gallery, The Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale, FAT Village Arts District, 3rd Avenue artists, and other local venues. There will be a shuttle bus rotating between each of these locations. Multiple venues will host their own new art exhibitions simultaneously for one night, and all events will be FREE, and open to the public. ART FALLOUT venues are unified in the mission to bring greater awareness to the thriving art scene within the downtown Fort Lauderdale area, as well as celebrate the Broward County Cultural Division's designation of October as "a month for art," supporting the production and presentation of contemporary art in the local community.



Fiber Optics includes regional, national, and international artists:

- Alex Trimino**
- Amy Gross**
- Andrea Huffman**
- Aurora Molina**
- Belaxis Buil**
- Bobbi Meier**
- Carlos Alejandro**
- John and Caroline Collette**
- Clara Varas**
- Dina Knapp**
- Doerte Weber**
- Eurydice Kamviselli**
- Erin Minckley Chlaghmo**
- Georgeta Fondos**
- Gina Denton**
- Jee Park**
- Jennifer Pettus**
- Jerry Bleem**
- Jesse Harrod**
- Kaleb Magnos**
- Karelle Levy**
- Karina Pais**
- Kate Kretz**
- Kathryn Shinko**
- Kelly Boehmer**
- Kevin Curry**
- Kristina Thalin**
- Laz Ojalde (LMNOQ)**
- Leslie Pontz**

Martin Casuso
Maya Schonenberger
Melissa Bush
Michael Sylvan Robinson
Regina Jestrow
Roxana Josefina Martinez
Sasha de Koninck
Selina Roman
Shawna Munro
Shea Wilkinson
Tasha Lewis
Tod Hensley

GALLERY & JUROR INFO:

1310 Gallery, a recent winner of *New Times* magazine "Best Gallery 2013/Editorial choice," offers a unique 3000 square foot exhibition space, split into 3 levels. The gallery is housed within ArtSpace's Sailboat Bend Artist Lofts, situated in a scenic and historic part of downtown Ft Lauderdale. 1310 Gallery is an artist run collective that rotates art exhibitions monthly.

Lisa Rockford, Juror, received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Lisa is an Assistant Professor at Broward College, a resident artist at Sailboat Bend artist Lofts, and founding member 1310 Gallery. Lisa began curating Contemporary art exhibitions in her position as Art Services Director of the Dittmar Gallery at Northwestern University in 2000.

Lisa Rockford has curated and juried numerous group exhibitions in Broward County, collaborating with prominent art professionals as guest judges. The guest judges have included Jose E. Lopez, Director & Publisher of Art Districts Magazine, Janet Batet, Curator & Art Critic, Francie Bishop Good, Artist and Art Collector, Owner of Girls Club Art Collection, Guerra De la Paz, International Artists, Rochi Llana, Executive Director of Hardcore Art Contemporary Space, Dan & Kathryn Mikesell, Art Collectors, Founders of Fountainhead Art Residency, Klaudio Rodriguez, Assistant Curator at The Frost Art Museum, and Carol Jazzar, Owner and Director of Carol Jazzar Contemporary Art, and more.

As a visual artist, Lisa Rockford exhibits her artwork both nationally and internationally, has been featured on Chicago Public Radio, and covered by the Chicago Reader, Time Out Chicago, Peel Magazine, and the Miami Herald. Lisa was awarded the Innovative Collaborative Grant through Funding Arts Broward in 2011 for her Solo show at the Art and culture Center and named as one of Gold Coast Magazine's "40 under 40 Rising Stars."