

Storefronts

A Core Program of Shunpike

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Storefronts Inaugurates South Lake Union Program with Eight Local Artists

Posted on December 30, 2013 by storefrontsseattle

Through February 14, 2014

Art Walk: January 17, 6PM, Uptown Espresso
500 Westlake Avenue North, South Lake Union



Storefronts artist Elizabeth Gahan in front of "Graphic Plume"

Shunpike is thrilled to announce our new Storefronts project in Seattle's South Lake Union neighborhood!

Eight local artists will be profiled in South Lake Union through February 14, 2014, with an informal art walk on Friday, January 17. Meet us at Uptown Espresso at 6PM for a casual tour around the neighborhood with participating artists on hand!

From an electronic drawing machine creating a drawing every week, cartoon owls, a gigantic chalkboard, and layered photographs of South Lake Union architecture over time, each artist brings their distinct vision to windows throughout the area. Featuring Brian

Benfer, Zachary Burns, Elizabeth Gahan, Aaliyah Gupta, Clare Johnson, narboo, Robert Twomey, and Sylwia Tur.

Brian Benfer Chalkboard

This project will involve installing one, or a series of impermanent “chalkboard/s” on the wall/s of the space. Essentially, the wall/s will be covered in black chalkboard paint, upon which I will rub a ceramic composite. The intention is that the rubbings will reveal markings that signify the history of the residual left behind from prior occupation. The premise of the project explores the ideas of history, education, and residue within the constructs of a space—the concept of “chalkboard” being a metaphor for conveying information (i.e. education).

Zachary Burns Layers

South Lake Union is an interesting example of the changes and preservation that happen as a city evolves. The intersection of Mercer and Aurora has undergone many changes. Some of the buildings around it have been there for over 100 years while other are built and torn down every year. I have selected 3 buildings surrounding that intersection. The first is the Copier's Northwest building. Built in 1919 this building has remained mostly unchanged both visually and in use despite the changes around it. The second is the J.T. Hardeman Hat Co. building, which is now home of the School of visual concepts. This building is interesting because while it is visually unchanged from when it was built in 1920, it has been completely re-purposed. The third building is the former Hostess Cake bakery. Recently purchased out of bankruptcy by Franz Bakery, its fate is unclear. Set within the frame of the change around them, these three buildings, and others like them, question the choices we make to preserve the past while moving into the future.

Elizabeth Gahan Synthetic Growth

In “Graphic Plume,” Elizabeth Gahan uses magazine ads and common synthetic materials, such as corrugated plastic, vinyl and spray paint, to create an installation informed by nature and pattern. The advertising content is fractured and obscured allowing the beauty of color and graphic design to remain like a plume of hexagons sweeping across the wall in the window space. The repetition of forms, vibrant colors and a prolific amount of reused materials in this work also suggests the potential for these forms to multiply and expand further.

Aaliyah Gupta Weather

Weather has been a focus for me recently, because of its significant impact on my life here in the Northwest. Fall and winter bring storms and gusting wind, surging rivers and enormous waves, horizontal rain and hail. The swirls of wind and water enclose me at their epicenter, sometimes in a comfortable rhythm, other times in a frenzy of activity that echoes the chaos of the world. In the spring, the blanket of drizzling grayness is punctuated with moments of sparkling light. My body responds viscerally, craving the sun and its warmth. As the clouds give way to sparkling skies, I celebrate every moment of light and warmth, transcendent sunsets, cloud patterns, and the occasional sunburst.

My paintings are about nature and about life. The storms that rage around us. The shifting skies that periodically erupt in a blaze of color. The vortexes that we find ourselves in. The upheavals, natural and political, which impact our day-to-day existence.

Clare Johnson Drawing From Literature

These drawings are all inspired by favorite pieces of writing, books I've read and re-read throughout different times in my life. The scenes in the art are designed to create the same overall feeling I get from each work of literature. Sometimes this includes imagery or landscapes I imagine being part of the setting; sometimes setting is only hinted at, or not addressed at all. In most instances, the drawing is not of any real concrete detail or scene from the book, but rather uses a mixture of elements to show the feelings, images, symbols or themes in my head as I read it. Each drawing is titled after a small fragment of writing from each book, a quote that particularly resonates with me. They're usually somewhat plain and short; leaving them open to interpretation and letting the words have more space on their own than in the books. I wanted to highlight the possibilities in these quotes, uncovering them from the larger texts and letting them have an additional life and power of their own.

narboo

I am a local artist residing in Ballard and working from my studio Space, in the Greenwood Collective. I am influenced by the city and nature and this is why I love Seattle. My art is full of bold lines, lots of color, and crazy animal and bird characters. If I can make people smile, then I feel I've done my job as an artist.

Robert Twomey Convex Mirror

My early experience as an engineer and neuroimaging researcher has given me intimate knowledge of technical and scientific practice. This is a key element of my artistic endeavor. I approach creative work with the critical perspective of an artist—interested in particular technologies' impact on our evolving culture, and how technologies can be used to create new forms of expression, communication, and meaning. I am addressing the questions of who we are and how we see ourselves through work integrating traditional and new forms of expression. My projects are technically innovative while critically engaged with material and cultural tradition.

Sylwia Tur Templates

When working on my sculptures, I am using analogies to the processes that come together to form language. The shapes I choose to make are simply things I am missing. Thus I am filling a gap for myself between what is already present and what I want to bring into being. Thinking of language as a system keeps pointing me in the direction of exploring many other systems present around us, those created by nature, those formed by humans and machines, and those systems, which are combinations of them all.

Architecture also plays a significant role as an inspiring force behind the aesthetic of my work. I am interested in basic geometric shapes, which are often devoid of inherent identity, thus providing a clean slate for my work. I can choose their identity by the way I bring them together, creating a personal language of objects out of this chosen vocabulary.

The exhibition will be on view from November 18, 2013 – February 14, 2014. For more information: <http://www.storefrontsseattle.com>

About Shunpike:

Shunpike's mission is to fuel innovation in the arts by building productive partnerships, cultivating leadership and providing direct services to arts groups of all kinds.

Currently serving over 180 groups across Washington state, Shunpike provides small to medium-sized arts groups with financial and administrative services so they can get on with the job of creating art. Shunpike's Storefronts program encourages community engagement and urban renewal by placing art installations and pop-up creative enterprises in vacant retail space.



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Activating neighborhoods and overlooked spaces by filling vacant urban spaces with art installations, pop-up boutiques, galleries, and community groups since 2010.

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[**wlyastley**](#) says:

December 31, 2013 at 12:36 AM

Fantastic!

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