



Artists archives of the Western Reserve

1834 East 123rd Street ▪ Cleveland, Ohio ▪ 44106-1910

FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE:

The Artists Archives of the Western Reserve Gallery

1834 E 123rd St Cleveland, OH 44106

www.ArtistsArchives.org

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Title of Exhibition: *EVAC: Experiencing Veterans & Artists Collaboration*

Dates: May 16 - July 6, 2019

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 16th, 5:30 - 8:00pm

Title of Accompanying Program: Art without Limits: VR Technology

Date of Program: Saturdays, May 25th & June 1st, 1-3:00pm

Today, the world feels increasingly divided. As people segment into online eco-chambers, we find it difficult to understand other's experiences. This is especially true where trauma is concerned- the more painful and complicated the memory, the deeper the riff it can create.

Isolation is a persistent problem in the veteran community, as many who have served feel profoundly separated from their civilian counterparts. This summer, the Artists Archives will host an exhibition which bridges the gap between service members and society.

***Experiencing Veterans & Artist Collaborations (EVAC)* is a touring exhibition** organized by Lee Fearnside, Joseph Van Kerkhove and Dr. John Schupp, 3 Tiffin University curators who paired veterans from World War II through the Post 9/11 period, and all branches of the military, with artists who interpret their stories.

As curator Lee Fearnside explains, "Mental health providers are losing the battle with helping veterans in part because veterans feel isolated and don't want to ask for help. Studies show veterans who share their stories may help with PTSD recovery. With EVAC, veterans have an opportunity to share their stories one time, and to have that story impact many people."

The 29 works on display are created through a variety of printmaking techniques and are exhibited with excerpts from the veterans' interviews. Some images are heart-rending, some funny, and others out-right terrifying, but they are unified by stunning execution and a deep reverence for the stories they share. The show features national artists as well as 5 artists from Ohio, including Liz Maugins and Maggie Denk-Leigh, Associate Professor of Printmaking at the Cleveland Institute of Art.

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Using storytelling and art, EVAC educates the public about life in the military through empathy and creative expression. As the EVAC organization describes “[the exhibition] gives glimpses into real people’s lived experiences. It creates an environment for a viewer that invites genuine understanding and engagement. The process of storytelling and interpretation central to EVAC makes it a project uniquely positioned to promote empathy from multiple groups – the artist and viewer for the veteran’s experience, and the veteran for the artist’s realization of their stories.”

EVAC will open with reception on Thursday, May 16th, from 5:30 - 8:00pm at the Artists Archives of the Western Reserve. The event will be celebrated with veteran owned and operated *The Sweet Spot* gelato truck, as well as light refreshments. As always, AAWR openings are FREE and open to the public with free parking available in our adjacent lot as well as on East 123rd Street.

As part of the EVAC exhibition, the Archives will host programming that explores alternative means of art production. Art Bites- *Professional Practices: Art without Limits: VR Technology* presented by Blue Robot LLC will be held on May 25 and June 1 and provide artists the opportunity to create in a virtual reality environment. Limit: 10 participants per session. Registration required (please call 216.721.9020 or visit artistsarchives.org)

About the Artists Archives of the Western Reserve: The Artists Archives of the Western Reserve is a unique archival facility and regional museum that preserves representative bodies of work created by Ohio visual artists and, through ongoing research, exhibition and educational programs, actively documents and promotes this cultural heritage for the benefit of the public.

The Artists Archives of the Western Reserve would also like to thank Ohio Arts Council, Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, Ohio Art Dealers Association, the George Gund Foundation, the Bernice & David E. Davis Foundation, the William Bingham Foundation and the Zufall Foundation for their continuing support.

Thank you for your consideration! For more information or high resolution images, please contact:

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