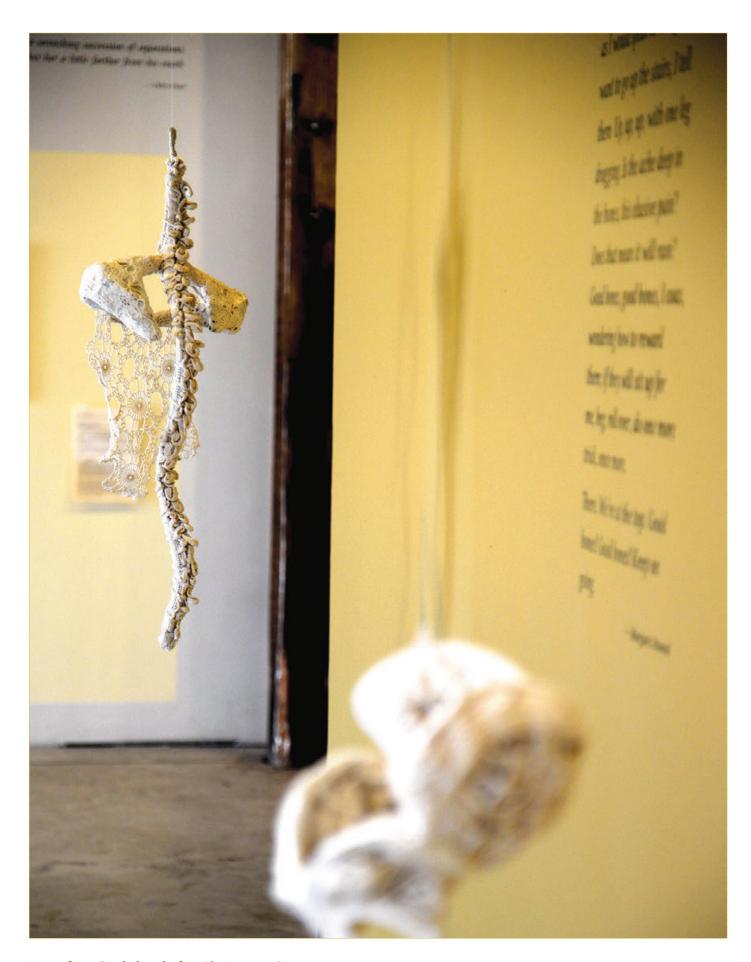
THE THIRD ACT contemplating aging

01.18 - 03.02.2014





Athens Institute for Contemporary Art



View of Ann Rowles' works from The Porosity Series

THE THIRD ACT contemplating aging

01.18 - 03.02.2014

Curator:

Lizzie Zucker Saltz

ATHICA Director Emerita

Collaborating Scholar:

Dr. Anne P. Glass

The Institute of Gerontology,

College of Public Health at The University of Georgia

Participating Artists:

Malena Bergmann-Charlotte, NC | John English-Athens, GA Lisa Freeman-Athens, GA | Tom Hussey-Dallas, TX | Karen Hymer-Tucson, AZ Cecelia Kane-Decatur, GA | Peter Nelson-Northfield, MN David Noah-Athens, GA | Ann Rowles-Atlanta, GA

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Learning to age well together is a different goal from trying to pretend we are going to stay young and live forever, and, we would argue, a better one.

— A. P. Glass & R. S. Vander Plaats



Scenes from the opening

Top:
Anne P. Glass.
Bottom, from left to right:
Jason Sokolic, installation assistant;
Lizzie Z. Saltz, Curator;
Tatiana Veneruso, ATHICA Director.
Right Page:
Lizzie Z. Saltz and
Dr. Anne P. Glass.

Reflections on Creating The Third Act

From Lizzie Z. Saltz:

I was struck anew by the simple power of metaphors to shape our lives when I viewed the Jane Fonda TED talk, Life's Third Act (January 2012). In it she introduced the notion of imagining a life journey in the shape of an ascending staircase, rather than the customary mountaintop model with its emphasis on our peak at a "productive" middle age. I saw Fonda through the eyes of an "older mom," caught in my generations' statistically unique crunch between child raising and the care of aging parents.

I had only just begun to grasp the significance of passing the fifty-mark when I remembered how bad a curatorial itch I had to exhibit

Malena Bergmann's 14' long kinetic sculpture, Final Hour: Compline. An astonishing testament to the horrors of hospitalaided prolongation of life at any cost, it is a powerful work which provided the impetus for me to develop a fuller dialogue on the complex issue of aging. I am grateful to the ATHICA Exhibition Committee for their willingness to mounting support exhibit addressing a topic

generally regarded as taboo, or a "downer."

The audience response has been gratifying as well, as viewers open themselves up to these nine artists' visions—from the wonderful repeatartists who have been so generous in sharing their newest explorations with us, such as John English and Cecelia Kane, to those gifted to us from the ether of the Open Call, from whence came the marvelous works of Lisa Freeman, Tom Hussey, Karen Hymer and Peter Nelson. Athens is richer for all of them, as they collectively form a material essay on the inherently chimerical topic of the changing nature of our lives' trajectories.

I feel extremely lucky as well to have been introduced to Dr. Glass, whose contributions have added immeasurably to the experience of our viewers, as well as myself. In the end, I hope that this exhibition provides our audiences with fresh ways of viewing their own journey.

From Anne P. Glass:

When Lizzie Zucker Saltz approached me last summer with the idea for an exhibition focused on aging, I was delighted—collaboration between the arts community and the academic community is rare. Collaboration with an academic gerontology program is even more uncommon. Yet I could quickly imagine so many possibilities.

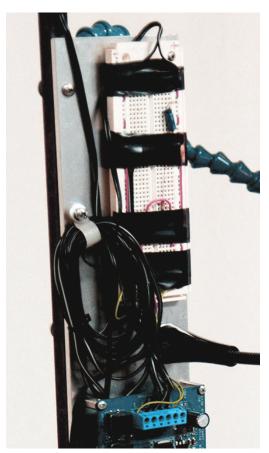
First and foremost, my own research with elder intentional communities has led me to develop a model of "aging better together intentionally." As part of this model, I have documented the advantages of dealing with aging communally, through sharing information, humor, mutual support and meaningful discussions about aging. To make this happen,

> individuals first have to accept that they are aging, and granted, not everyone is ready to do that! However, I find that those who can embrace that fact appreciate opportunities age-denying society, which is one reason I was enthusiastic innovative way to help get

to talk. Unfortunately, few opportunities are offered in our about this exhibit-what an the community engaged in contemplating this topic.

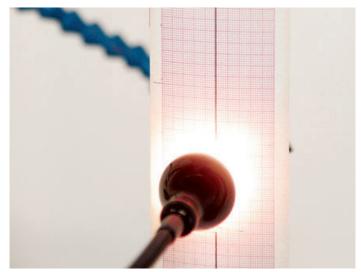
Second, the show provided an opportunity to involve our gerontology students in providing ideas and information. In particular, I am thankful for the active roles taken by Melissa Armstrong, who is completing her graduate certificate in gerontology and working as an MSW intern in the Institute this year, and Megan Vogt, a recent MPH/gerontology certificate graduate, who presently is employed at the Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging.

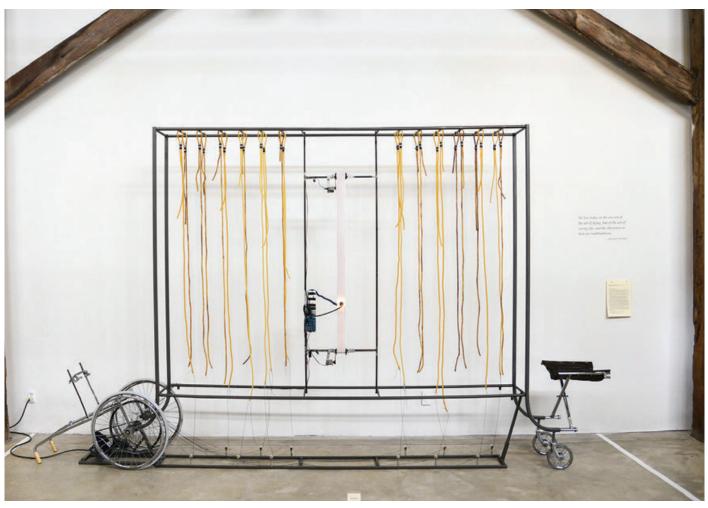
Finally, it is my hope that by working closely together—from organizing the Contemplating Aging Symposium to providing wall quotes, together we have made a stronger and more interesting exhibition. The ultimate goal of gerontology, as I see it, is to help individuals have the best experience with aging possible; this exhibit is an wonderful way to promote conversations that can help make that happen. Thanks to all the artists, writers, speakers, volunteers and staff involved, and finally and especially to Lizzie, who brought it all together!



We live today in the era not of the art of dying, but of the art of saving life, and the dilemmas in that are multitudinous.

— Sherwin B. Newland





Contemplating Aging | pg. 6

Malena Bergmann with Kit Kube, kinesis CHARLOTTE, NC | Born 1967

Final Hour: Compline (2007-)

Kinetic sculpture, medical tubing, EKG strip,

mixed-media

Bergmann has reworked *Final Hour: Compline*, her fourteen-foot long kinetic sculpture, for over six years. As with other works in the exhibit, it was inspired by time spent with an ailing relative, in this case the artist's step-mother. It was also created in response to the mysterious arrival of an EKG strip tracing the last hour of the woman's life that was mailed to the artist anonymously.

A small spotlight focuses on the EKG strip as it scrolls and unscrolls, from beating heart-to-flat line, surrounded by wheelchair parts and strings jerking stained medical tubing. In its entirety, its construction relates to the incredible lengths the scientific and medical profession will go to in order to continue life. In the artist's words:

It becomes a metaphor for the human body's struggle to survive while it is simultaneously and actively dying. It also speaks to an acceptance of death and concern for the qualities of that passage. Final Hour: Compline is part of a larger series of artworks called Gift and Baggage of Body, each of which is named after one of the prayers from the medieval Book of Hours, and all of which address mortality and our incessant progress towards our own final hour.

The sterility of the machinery and medical apparatus might also inspire viewers to reflect on the growing trend toward home hospice care, with its emphasis on providing comfort during our last days, rather than on an often fruitless and unpleasant effort to prolong life, which became the norm only over the past half-century. In the face of these choices, people are increasingly understanding the need for advance directives, or living wills, so that loved ones are not burdened with heart-wrenching ethical decisions at a time when they might well be in need of mental

space to prepare for the departure of a loved one. Most important, as you age, is to choose a person to be your healthcare decision maker in the event you are unable to make those choices, and discuss your preferences with that individual before there is a crisis. (The Five Wishes section of the website of the national non-profit Aging with Dignity provides a very useful downloadable template for making a record of just such preferences.)*

Most people say they would prefer to die in their homes, but in reality only about a quarter of older adults achieve this goal. About half die in hospitals and the rest in nursing homes. Use of home hospice care is one of the best ways to try to remain in familiar surroundings, yet admission to hospice is often delayed. Enrollment is increasing, however, rising from about 18% of Medicare decedents using hospice in 2001, to 30% in 2007.**

Bergmann's admirable address of such issues is reflective of her general interest in the role of mortality. As she noted in a recent statement:

My interest in the body, in nature and in time itself as a vehicle for artistic investigation has offered me reassurance that this human continuum of 'now' and 'then' is worthy of repeated contemplation.

"The awareness of death that defines human nature is inseparable from—indeed, it arises from—our awareness that we are not self-authored, that we follow in the footsteps of the dead." ***

^{*}https://fivewishesonline.agingwithdignity.org

^{**}http://www.nhpco.org/sites/default/files/public/Statistics_ Research/2013_Facts_Figures.pdf

^{***}Robert Pogue Harrison, The Dominion of the Dead. Chicago:



John English ATHENS, GA | Born 1940

Fountain of You (2013)

Walker, fake products, basket, mixed-media

On a sly, satirical note, John English, local conceptual artist, writer and activist, has created an installation of faux anti-aging products specifically for this exhibit. By placing his "products" in the baskets of a customized walker—a device commonly associated with aging—the piece pokes fun at western culture's relentless efforts to forestall the inevitable, and underscores our resistance to and lack of respect for our natural life cycle.

The rise of the huge anti-aging industry over the past half-century stems from a confluence of factors—the escalation of disposable wealth and the first-world "problem" of longevity, plus the emphasis on appearance that emerged from an image-heavy, celebrity-driven media. While in recent years there has been some significant kickback in terms of the presentation of a variety of body types and even ages in popular culture, youth worship continues unabated. Superficially driven by advertising's siren call, our obsession with youthfulness is ultimately a commentary on our fear of aging.

Many Americans in this youth-focused society go to great lengths to appear young. Anti-aging products and services are a gargantuan business—in 2013 this market was some \$262 billion and it is expected to continue to grow at an increase of \$17 billion annually.*

Despite clear admonitions from the U.S. medical establishment that anti-aging products and services have not been proven effective in slowing the aging process or extending life, nonetheless, Americans appear to be in relentless pursuit of that elusive fountain of youth.

*http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/antiaging-products-and-services-the-global-market-220249801.html

A SELECTION FROM THE FOUNTAIN OF YOU PRODUCT LABELS:

Insta-woody!
ED's Fast-Acting, MegaPowerhouse
Big blue pill
Restore your teenage
firmness again...
Marvelous erections lasting
eight hours!

Botoxxxic
Fill- in full facial features
Possible, serious side effects:
Injections of this chemical
could cause botulism,
pneumonia,
swallowing difficulties and/or
breathing problems. No joke!

Oil of Ole' Sexy Skin Energy with Spanish Fly emollient Wrinkles Away in 1 easy App!

The Royal Honey Pot A Faux Face Lift With Bee Venom Zap

FACIAL MASKerade Hyaluronic Hydration for Full Royal Flush

Permanent
Hair Dye
Coal
Black
Covers telltale grey
like a blanket of soot!

Steal this vial!
Great steak flavor!
T-bone
Testosterone
Puts lead in your
pencil again
As seen on TV!

Shrinking Man, Ltd.
Itty-Bitty Belly
Lipozene
with acai berry tincture
Lose 30 pounds in 30 days!
Old Timey Formula

R E V I V A L Revitalizing Elixir With Bible-thumping Potency

ENERGY JOLT
CoQ10
The powerhouse coenzyme
that oxidizes fats & sugars
into turbo energy...
A product of Younger, Inc.

Pharm-Bogus
DHEA
Nuetraceutrical
A simulated synthetic steroid
like those of the adrenal glands
& gonads.
Live longer...Re-heat sex life
No evidence to support the
claims of this
hormone
substitute...Web MD

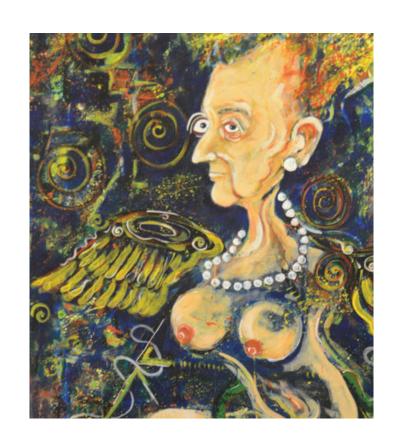
THE CLONE STORE
Bio-Identical
Estrogen jelly
Hormone Replacement
in tasty Peaches & Cream
Flavor
A lil' dab'll do ya!

Eat
less
to
live
longer!
Reservatrol
A calorie restriction mimetic
The pill that makes you feel full

Forever Young
Nutritional Supplements
Selenium
& Zinc
replacements
Our motto:
Live longer & better
with a daily dose

A man who wants to define himself as a real lover of women admires what shows of her past on a woman's face, before she ever saw him, and the adventures and stresses that her body has undergone, the scars of trauma, the changes of childbirth, her distinguishing characteristics, the light is her expression. The number of men who already see in this way is far greater than the arbiters of mass culture would lead us to believe.

— Naomi Wolf







A man who wants to define himself as a real lover of women admires what shows of her past on a woman's face, before she ever save him, and the adventure, and stresses that her body has undergone, the sears of trauma, the changes of childbirth, her distinguishing characteristics, the light is her expression. The number of men who already see in this way is far greater than the arbitrs of mass culture would lead us to believe.



Lisa Freeman ATHENS, GA | Born 1965

Old Man Boy (2009) Everytime a Bell Rings... (2011) Acrylic on canvas

The artist's neo-expressionist painting style expresses with intensity the joy of being human, and alive. In *Everytime a Bell Rings...* older facial features contrast with the nude figure, implying sexual freedom women often experience as the comfort level with their own body and its desires improves with age.

The figure's mischievous grin and erotic appeal are complemented by the angelic wings sprouting from her back, adding to the feeling of well-being and freedom. The inclusion of the pearl jewelry is an amusing detail that serves to emphasize her nudity, perhaps implying a post-party liaison.

Wings was the painting's original title, yet Freeman ultimately chose Every Time a Bell Rings..., a reference to Capra's 1946 classic, It's a Wonderful Life. At the film's climax the protagonist's young daughter Zuzu Bailey proclaims: "Look, Daddy. Teacher says, every time a bell rings an angel gets his wings." This gives us another clue to the spiritual undercurrent in this painting. While it is the mother and wife who literally save the day many times over in the film, ironically the "guardian angel" character of Clarence was written to be male.

The elder woman portrayed here appears to rejoice in her strength. There is also an implication of ascendancy to a spiritual plane. This stands in stark contrast to contemporary negative attitudes towards aging and dying.

Compressing the span of an individual's lifetime into a single image is achieved in Freeman's painting, *Old Man Boy*, through the uncanny emotional impact of her expressionist style. Her reworking of Diane Arbus' renowned Vietnam era 1962 photograph of a

boy holding a toy hand grenade converts that iconic image into an epigram on the ticking timebomb of our life expectancy.

When discussing life expectancy, both overall years and healthy years are important to consider. In the United States, men who reach 65 can expect approximately 13 more years of healthy life. Women who are 65 can expect about 15 more years of healthy life. Both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy is lower in the south than the national average.* The overall average life expectancy in Georgia is 77.**

*http://onlineathens.com/breaking-news/2013-07-18/golden-years-shorter-sicker-southern-states

**http://www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/usa/georgia-lifeexpectancy





She is leaving him, not all at once, which would be painful enough, but in a wrenching succession of separations. One moment she is here, and then she is gone again, and each journey takes her a little farther from his reach. He cannot follow her, and he wonders where she goes when she leaves.

— Debra Dean



Tom Hussey DALLAS, TX | Born 1964

Reflections Series [subset] (2009–2012): Airline Pilot, Fireman, Jazz Singer, Nurse, Scientist, Teacher

Digitally manipulated photography

The Novartis pharmaceutical company commissioned Hussey to create these images to promote their new treatment for combatting Alzheimer's, the memory destroying brain disease.

Transcending its commercial origins, Hussey's series is remarkable for its celebratory focus on the universal enjoyment of shared memories. The latter is key to a vital aspect of the third act of our lives, one increasingly understood as a vital period of time during which —ideally—we come to terms with the arc of our personal journey.

Too few take the opportunity for the simple psychological space needed for contemplation. Maybe it is because of our society's focus on "doing" versus "being." Sometimes it is because our last years and days can become filled with considerations of the ever-increasing medical options for prolonging life, rather than on learning the art of how to end life with grace, surrounded by loved ones.

The artist drew his inspiration for the *Reflections* series after a discussion with a WWII veteran on the cusp of becoming an octogenarian:

He was about to celebrate his 80th birthday. He commented that he didn't understand how he could be 80 years old, as he felt he was still a young man. He just didn't feel it was possible he could be 80 years old. I started thinking about a milestone age approaching for me, as I was nearing 40. I realized that everyone thinks of themselves at a certain age or time in life. Based on that conversation, I built a bathroom set and photographed Gardner staring into his bathroom mirror, seeing himself as a 25 year-old young man. ... Based on that earlier portfolio image, I

was awarded a job for an Alzheimer's drug called the Exelon Patch ...[that] helps patients maintain long-term memories during the early stages of that horrific disease. I was fortunate to be included in a lot of the early concept stages for the campaign. I knew immediately location scouting and casting were going to be very important to evoke the emotions associated with the disease. The campaign has been extremely successful ... people universally respond to the images.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, the disease currently effects an estimated 5 million people age 65 and older. By dint of population projections, by 2025 the number of people age 65 and older who will contract Alzheimer's disease is estimated to reach 7.1 million—a 40% increase from current statistics. By 2050, the number of people age 65 and older with Alzheimer's disease may nearly triple, from 5 million to 13.8 million, barring the development of medical breakthroughs to prevent, slow or stop the disease. To put it in another light: While today an American develops Alzheimer's disease every 68 seconds, by 2050 an American may well develop the disease every 33 seconds.*

Fortunately, both the nation and the state of Georgia are giving increasing attention to this growing and devastating challenge.

*www.alz.org/alzheimers_disease_facts_and_figures. asp#prevalence



Intelligence, goodness, humanity, excitement, serenity. Over time, these are the things that change the musculature of your face, as do laughter, and animation, and especially whatever peace you can broker with the person inside.

It's furrow, pinch, and judgment that make us look older—our mothers were right. They said that if you made certain faces, they would stick, and they do. But our mothers forgot that faces of kindness and integrity stick as well.

Karen Hymer TUCSON, AZ | Born 1957

From the Skins Series: Self–handarm (2013) Photopolymer gravures printed on rag paper (see cover image)

Skin #3 (2012-2013)

Digital photos printed on heavy watercolor archival inkjet paper (created from iPhone captures) (see image on opposite page)

Untitled-Donna's back (2013) Photopolymer gravures printed on rag paper (see image on this page)

in their communities."

Fellow Third Act exhibition artist Cecelia Kane capturing Hymer's photogravure with her iPhone during the opening reception.

Hymer creates alluring images out of that which the mass media has habitually rejected as un-viewable: the appearance of our skin in its aged state. From the Skins Series, the large-scale quad print, Skin #3 is comprised of iPhone captures of extreme closeups of her own body. The Skins Series render the body as abstract landscapes, allowing Hymer to celebrate our journey towards mortality, rather than deny its existence. This approach is akin to the cultural practices of groups she has researched who have inspired her work. Cultures such as, in Hymer's words, "the Cree in Canada and the Maya in Guatemala [who] believe that when women enter menopause they can then become spiritual leaders

Hymer was also motivated by a desire to act against the unrelenting "focus on face lifts, tummy tucks, weight loss programs, hair removal" which she encountered after turning fifty.





In the long process of digging down in the heat of summer, I discovered strength, moderation, and bravery. I no longer felt the need to ask Mom about the nature of death. I had instead created a deep place of my own for thinking, and abiding-a place that confirmed my power in old age.

— Cecelia Kane



Cecelia Kane DECATUR, GA | Born 1946

How Am I Feeling Today? (2012-)

Selections from the series:
Day 12: Overheated, Day 16: Erotic, Day 22: Impatient, Day 26: Disappointed,
Day 27: Unsure, Day 33: Pleased, Day 40: Pressured, Day 42: Healthy, Day 46: Nervous, Day 50: Satisfied, Day 53: Reckless, Day 61: Having Faith

Oil pastel, pencil, oil stick, charcoal, India ink, conté crayon and other media on various papers

The Mother Hole Project Documentation (2012)

Holes and Ladder
Residency proposal drawing
Ink pastel marker on tissue paper

Cecelia-at-future-hole-site, Early digging, Cecelia-digging-the-hole, Hole site early progress, Testing the branches in the hole, Fashioning the ladder, Lashing the rungs with double clove hitches and square knots, Stacking pattern incorporating immovable stones in wall, Moving higher up the wall, Wall of marble shards complete, Ladder-in-smallhole-View B, The-Hole-in-the-Field

Photo documentation of earth work (in chronological order)

Kane has two series represented in the exhibit. The selection of twelve drawings from *How Am I Feeling Today?* is a subset of self-portraits that the artist has been creating, at the pace of one a week, since 2012. She will continue until 89 weeks of works are completed. These in turn are based on the artist's 2009 series by the same title of 89 self-portrait photographs, which were taken on a daily basis. The artist explains:

How Am I Feeling Today?" is the title of the series and the question about who I might be as I contemplate my mortality. Am I just thoughts as Descartes posited, or feelings?, or the face that people recognize as me? In [it] I am a witness to my own materiality and nonmateriality.

Each week I've been creating one frontal or $\frac{3}{4}$ view portrait of my feeling of the moment. I

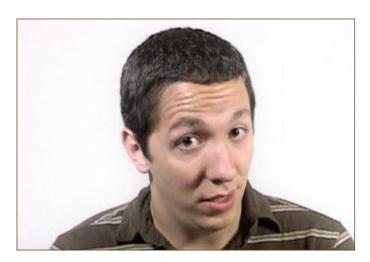
am investigating the nature of my self, which seems to be a mixture of thoughts, emotions, body and awareness. This work is a study of aging as seen through my bathroom mirror, based on 89* photographs, one per day, that I took in 2009 staring into my mirror. At the time, I identified my emotion, embodied that feeling on my face, and snapped a picture. For the past year and a half I have been creating mixed media paintings on paper of these headshots, and am posting them as my profile pictures on Facebook. Each portrait is titled by the day, and the feeling. Example: "Day 3-Cosmic" and "Day 32-Groggy."

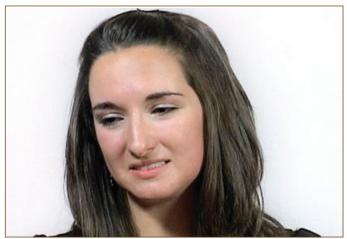
As I age, I rejoice in life, but I also grieve for the things that are lost...my vigor, my youth, loved ones, health, as well as regrets for lost opportunities. This series in progress attempts to validate the voices I feel inside my elusive "self". (89 is an oblique reference to my mother, Hazel Fagan Kane, who lived 89 years and was a strong identity)

Kane was motivated to create *The Mother Hole*—a site-specific earthwork—by the passing of her own mother in 1997. The residency at the Carving-Studio in West Rutland, VT, where it was dug, resulted in the artist's buying herself a considerable amount of time to contemplate the awareness of her own aging. Kane's words best describe the process:

"In the summer of 2012, I dug a deep hole in Vermont at the site of a former marble quarry. I lined it in marble shards gathered there, and hand-fashioned a ladder from aspen that I harvested from the forest. The Mother Hole is an environmental "well" for examining my own mortality and the possibility of transformation in that process. Initially ... (it) was to be a performative device for asking my deceased mother, Hazel, the nature of death. Digging a hole is a metaphor for plunging deep into the self, for birth as well as death, and the personal struggle that the mythologist Joseph Campbell called "the hero's journey." Each day for five weeks, I recorded my progress, blogged about my thoughts, encountered rocks and roots and obstacles to be overcome along the way. I always allowed for the possibility of failure or exhaustion. In the long process of digging down in the heat of summer, I discovered strength, moderation, and bravery. I no longer felt the need to ask Mom about the nature of death. I had instead created a deep place of my own for thinking, and abiding—a place that confirmed my power in old age.

In turn, the artist's creation of such a ritual highlights the need for such meditative practices in a culture that by-and-large, lacks them.





After her husband and two of her siblings died of old age, my grandmother stated that she too was ready to die. This perplexed me.

-Peter Nelson



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Peter Nelson NORTHFIELD, MN | Born 1981

On Dying (2008)
Digital video
8.28 minutes

In the artist's words, his video features:

...twenty-somethings lip-syncing the words of elderly people on the subject of aging & death.

After Nelson interviewed the elders, he encouraged his young actors to "listen to the[ir] words, write them down, and try to internalize them as much as possible...the lack of video [of the elders] allowed the actors to embody (and therefore internalize), rather than mimic what they see."

This stroke of inspiration turned into seven tourde-force performances that demonstrate how well those in their first act can empathize with the issues of those in their third act, if given an opportunity. As Nelson states "this presentation highlights generational incongruities, presenting the viewer with perceptions of young and old people simultaneously."

It also effectively—and powerfully—erases the usual swath of denial that protects media images of youth from the inevitability of our demise.

Nelson was inspired by:

...a number of family deaths [that] spurred me to think about my own mortality, and how my views differ from my healthy, yet depressed, ninety-three year old grandmother. These disparate perspectives led me to interview elderly people on the topic of dying.... After her husband and two of her siblings died of old age, my grandmother stated that she too was ready to die. This perplexed me. Especially, because when people described my 93-year-old grandmother, they often use the term "firecracker." She was physically and mentally fit. Sharp. Spry.

As a then 26 year old (perhaps a bit

arrogant and naive), I couldn't understand my grandmother's hospitable view of death. I needed to further explore our incongruous perspectives. I wanted to somehow draw a connection between our disparate viewpoints.

I decided to interview my grandmother, to draw out her thoughts on dying in more detail. Then, to get a wider variety of perspectives, I interviewed additional elderly people on the topics of death and dying.

When reviewing this exhibit for the Atlanta-based online arts blog *Burnaway* ,Taylor Hobsen observed the following about Nelson's video:

These segments fully explore the transcending impact of death across age boundaries, as the juxtaposition between voice and mouth create a disjointed effect. Furthermore, the narratives of these aged interviewees often recount personal experiences of dying companions, sometimes even of childhood memories of death, a then distant notion still potent enough to haunt youthful eyes. These layers of age, history, and reflection sustain much of the exhibition*

*Growing Old Examined in "The Third Act" at ATHICA, February 7, 2014; www.burnaway.org



There are a host of other positive changes that open up new opportunities for creative expression as we age. It may be easier to define problems and come up with strategies over time, for instance. Our increasing knowledge, our emotional history and our social, career, and life experience all add to the inner resources we tap during the creative process.

— Gene D. Cohen



David Noah ATHENS, GA | Born 1949

Curator selections of diptyches from: Silver Box Series (2013):
Agatha Coggins, Joyce Downing (bottom left page), John English, Homer Wilson, Wanda White

Individual portraits from:
Word of Mouth Poets & Writers Series
(2013):
Bob Ambrose (top left page), Gene Bianchi,
Mark Bromberg, Charlie Seagraves
Digital photography

Noah is known for documenting local events in striking black and white. Here his work aids in the appreciation of the ways that our own community benefits from our elders, from the insights that can only be had by those sharing wisdom and laughter derived from many years of experience and observation. Noah's insightful portraits fully convey the joy and understanding these poets and storytellers bring to their audiences.

He has two series represented in the exhibit. The first was shot at Word of Mouth open mic poetry readings. (The first ever was held on December 2, 2009.) The series was founded by poet/playwright/filmmaker Aralee Strange (1944–2013) who encouraged local writers to: "Sign Up, Mouth Off, and Pay Attention."

Her philosophy was: "You set up a microphone, and you will see poets show up." Since then Word of Mouth has spread to the young and the old of any race, creed or color who want to share their words with others at Athens' longest running open mic poetry night.

Aralee passed away in June 2013, but her spirit and inspiration can still be felt upstairs at The Globe on the first Wednesday of every month, where Word of Mouth is still going strong (athenswordofmouth.com).

Noah's second series was shot at Rabbit Box, a locally developed live series of storytelling events. A selection of diptyches of lively local elders in the process of telling true stories from their lives reveal the spark, depth and character of the photographer's subjects. Their performances took place during *Silver Box: Living History* at the Melting Point in May 2013 (Silver Box will reoccur again in May 2014).

Organizer and emcee Mary Whitehead created the concept of the *Silver Box* event, which was attended by over 260 absorbed listeners—a record at that time which has since been surpassed. Whitehead described the event as follows:

During the event elders told personal stories about how their lives have intersected with historical events. Wanda White recalled her experience working for Coretta Scott King. Homer Wilson spoke of his youthful impressions of the people and businesses on Hot Corner in Athens. Joyce Downing told of growing up in Alabama during the Great Depression. John English shared a lighthearted tale about witnessing the streaking event that landed Athens in the Guinness Book of World Records.

One of the most important reasons we tell stories is to pass on knowledge from older to younger generations. For elders, especially, autobiography is a way to identify and communicate crucial life events that have shaped them. This sharing can create social ties, build community, and help older people to retain a sense of identity at a time of life marked by significant changes in health status, relationships, and social roles.

Rabbit Box (www.rabbitbox.org) was launched in May 2012, with the goal of creating community one story at a time. Twenty-two events have been held since it began in May of 2012. It was founded by Marci White and continues to be directed by White and other key organizers, such as Roger Stahl, Matthew Epperson, Mary Whitehead, and Pat Priest.



Ann Rowles ATLANTA, **GA | Born 1947**

Cradle (2008)
Cotton thread, wire

Porosity (2005)

Cotton thread, wire, found doily

To create her *Porosity Series* the artist crocheted sculptures recalling the parts of the body that are most vulnerable as we age, such as the spine and pelvis on display (two of the twelve that comprise the series). These are the areas of her mother's body that were afflicted as the artist entered a period during which she became one of her mother's primary caregivers. (As is so very common, after a fall in 2004, her mother moved in with her. She passed in summer of 2013 after a series of stays in assisted living facilities.) About two-thirds of caregivers are female.*

As her mother battled with her osteoporosis and the breakability of her "ghost bones," (as the profession informally calls bones low in calcium which are hard to see on X-rays), the artist adjusted her sculptural practice—which was studio-based—to incorporate crochet. Its portability made it feasible for the artist to "carry her work with her to her mother's doctor's appointments and bedside." The medium was also meaningful for her, since her great-grandmother taught Rowles to crochet as a child.

Osteoporosis is one of the most common diseases and negatively impacts the mobility of aging populations, which in turn can result in increased isolation. This is especially true in a "car culture" built around a solo transportation model of living. The disease is also responsible for the cliché, stooped posture, which in itself impacts independence.

According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, 52 million Americans over the age of 50 have low bone density or osteoporosis. Additionally, one in two women and up to one in four men over the

age of 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis. A woman's risk of breaking a hip due to osteoporosis is equal to her risk of breast, ovarian and uterine cancer combined, and a man age 50 or older is more likely to break a bone due to osteoporosis than he is to get prostate cancer. By 2020, half of all Americans over age 50 are expected to have low bone density or osteoporosis.

Twenty percent of older adults who break a hip die within one year from problems related to the broken bone itself or the surgery to repair it. Many of those who survive need long-term nursing home care. It is important to remember that osteoporosis is not a normal part of aging, and fortunately we can take steps to prevent or lessen it. Many known preventative measures exist, including regular weight-bearing exercise and medications.**

*http://nof.org/articles/4

**http://www.caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/mmi-caregiving-costs-working-caregivers.pdf



Side view of Porosity shot during the opening reception.

Contemplating a Better End-of-life Experience

Most of us are completely unprepared for death and dying. Discussions about end-of-life care are usually not at the top of anyone's list, but if more people educated themselves about it before there was a crisis, they would be better able to make informed decisions when the time arose. These discussions can include a variety of topics, including what it means to have CPR and other interventions. One important component is advance care planning,

which involves understanding "the types of decisions that might need to be made, considering those decisions ahead of time, and then letting others know about your preferences, often by putting them into an advance directive" (National Institute on Aging, 2013). An advance directive is a legal tool that will help your wishes be carried out if you become incapacitated and are unable to speak for yourself. There are two major types of advance directives: a "living will" and a durable power of attorney. A living will is a document that specifies your wishes for situations that may occur. A durable power of attorney is a document that appoints someone to make medical or financial decisions for you if you are

unable to speak for yourself. It is especially helpful to identify a health care decision maker and be sure to discuss your preferences with this person. Sharing your preferences with others in your family as well as your physician is also helpful.

Many different tools exist to assist with advance planning, including the form developed here in Georgia (see references). Another that is especially user-friendly is the Five Wishes document. Five Wishes uses everyday language and provides a helpful framework to use to discuss end-of-life care with others (Aging with Dignity, 2013). These five wishes include both a type of living will as well as identifying the person you wish to be your health care decision maker. Georgia is one of the 42

states in which the Five Wishes meets the state's requirements. (It can be purchased online for five dollars or is offered for free at some hospitals.)

Another important topic that will come up while discussing preferences for end-of-life care is the potential use of comfort care. The number of individuals who use hospice and palliative care has increased in the last ten years. While hospice and

palliative care are both forms of comfort care, the terms are not interchangeable. Hospice care is the use of an interdisciplinary team for pain management, medical care, physical care, and emotional care for both patients and their families, and is often provided in the home. Hospice is specifically designed for those who are expected to live for six months or less, and is focused on making patients comfortable, not trying to cure them. Hospice also provides a bereavement benefit to families. In the 1970s, when hospice care was a new concept in the United States, it was mainly used for cancer patients. Today, cancer accounts for a little less than 40% of all hospice admissions. Other conditions that are common among those who utilize hospice care are

dementia, heart disease, and lung disease (National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, 2013).

Palliative care has emerged more recently and most people are less familiar with this term. You might think of palliative care as sort of the umbrella term for comfort care. Hospice is a form of palliative care, but true palliative care can be started earlier in the disease process to manage symptoms and keep patients as comfortable as possible, while they are still undergoing curative care. In either case, it is important to note that we have the knowledge to do a good job with the management of pain and other symptoms; our challenge is having enough health care providers with this expertise so that all patients who need it can access it (Glass & Burgess, 2011).



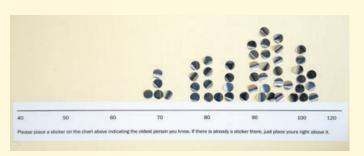
Discussions about these end-of-life care topics are never easy, but they are extremely worthwhile. Such discussions can prevent many emotional roller coasters and disagreements among family members, and help increase the likelihood that one's wishes are fulfilled. Considering that most people express a preference to die at home, and yet less than 30% succeed in this wish, a little advance preparation can go a long way. Additionally, if the situation arises that you are with a loved one who is dying, more education about end-of-life care can reduce fear and misunderstanding and help you be a better companion through the process.

In our society, where there is so much emphasis on "doing," sometimes the most important thing is to slow down and spend time just "being" with the person. This same reflection also applies to how you can help your friends who have sustained a loss. Remember that when a death occurs, each person affected by the loss has their own path and way of dealing with their grief. It may present in a wide variety of physical and emotional discomforts, and each person must deal with their loss in their own time; they cannot be hurried. But you can better prepare yourself to help by learning more about the end of life, and above all, by being there for them!

Melissa Armstrong MSW candidate & Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

& Anne P. Glass, Ph.D.
Associate Director
UGA Institute of Gerontology
College of Public Health
The University of Georgia

The images on these two pages show the education area of the gallery created by Dr. Anne P. Glass and her Fall 2013 students at The Institute of Gerontology, College of Public Health at the University of Georgia. The large wall chart titled Top Ten Trends Related to Aging in Georgia, seen on the left page, was also available as a take-home flyer with more details and citations. Melissa Armstrong, Master of Social Work student and intern at the Institute of Gerontology contributed to the project and Megan Vogt, Resource Specialist with the Northeast Georgia Area Agency on Aging provided our table of information.



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Participant Biographies



MELISSA ARMSTRONG

is a second-year Master of Social Work student at the University of Georgia. She is also completing graduate certificates in gerontology and nonprofit management. Melissa has interned with agencies such as Legacy

Link, the Area Agency on Aging in Gainesville, Georgia, and Athens Community Council on Aging. Her passion lies in working with low-income older adults in rural areas. She is currently working on a policy analysis of Title V of the Older Americans Act, which establishes and appropriates funding for the Senior Community Services Program.

MALENA BERGMANN was born in 1967 in Miami, Florida, received her BFA in Painting, from

UNC-Greensboro in 1989 and her MFA in Painting/Drawing from the University of Florida in 1992. She has also lived in AL, VA, MA and TX. "Back in the 70's in small town New England there was no such thing



as garbage collection. So on Saturdays I would go to the town dump with my folks. This was a necessity where I lived, but also a much-anticipated event. Because the dump had free access, we went 'shopping,' leaving with more than we brought. In the mid 80's I left the dump and went to college for painting, earned an MFA in painting/drawing and have been teaching in academia since then (currently UNC Charlotte). But somewhere in there I went back. To the dump. Many dumps. Originally a painter, I rediscovered that objects speak to me eloquently and with a great deal of urgency. I invent meaning through the manipulation of 'things' and actions, sometimes alone and often with collaborators." Bergmann now

considers North Carolina her home. Her favorite Xmas gift ever: "an abacus and an antique glass eye that my father probably found in the dump." She also makes "a mean fresh ginger-lemon meringue pie."

JOHN ENGLISH

began assembling personal collages and correspondence art works four decades ago. His recent creations have grown in scale—large installations, sculptural and concep-



tual pieces, often with a twist of satirical humor—and have been shown locally, in Atlanta and elsewhere. English also is a veteran freelance journalist who specializes in writing about the arts, profiles, travel journalism, and reporting on the media. His day job was a professor of arts criticism and magazine writing at The University of Georgia College of Journalism from 1970 to 2000, when he retired. He continues to live in Athens with his family despite a long-standing affinity for Italy and Malaysia. English is a habitué of Cine and ATHICA and drinks Lavazza espresso every morning. And, he's had a soul patch for years, natch.

LISA FREEMAN was born in Toronto, Ontario in 1965. She works predominantly in the medium of painting but also creates small scale assemblage pieces. She is a self-taught artist. Solo Exhibits include *Peculiar Children*—Artini's, Athens, GA, 2010

and *Through the Red Door*, Artland Loft Gallery, Watkinsville, GA, 2012. Group Exhibits of note, OCAF Small Works Exhibit, Watkinsville, GA, 2013 and Lyndon House Juried Exhibits (2007, 2008,



2012). Her work received an Award of Merit in the Lyndon House Exhibit of 2012. She has three grown children and resides in Athens, Georgia.

ANNE P. GLASS is a leading researcher in the field of elder self-directed intentional communities. In particular, she is conducting a longitudinal study of one of the first elder cohousing communities in the United States. She is especially interested in the potential



for older adults to provide mutual support to each other, and how communities can facilitate this process. Having received her Ph.D. from Virginia Tech in Environmental Design and Planning, she is now the Associate Director of the Institute of Gerontology and Associate Professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management in the College of Public Health at the University of Georgia. Her other major research focuses on improving long term and end-of-life care.

TOM HUSSEY has been honored with many awards and accolades throughout his career. In addition to several Addy's, recent distinctions of note include being named one of the "Top 10 Creatives in the World" by *Adweek Magazine*. Tom was also selected as one of the "Top 200 Advertising Photographers Worldwide" by Luerzer's Archive, and his work



has been featured in the Communication A r t s Photography Annual.

KAREN HYMER is a native of Tucson, Arizona, who earned her BFA from The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and Tufts University and her MA and MFA in photography from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.



For 22 years she taught Fine Art Photography at Pima Community College in Tucson, and is currently the Laboratory Specialist in the Photography Program at the college. Hymer's photographs have been exhibited in solo and group venues nationally and internationally and are in numerous permanent collections including the Polaroid International Collection and the Center for Creative Photography. In 2013 her work was exhibited at the New Grounds Gallery, Albuquerque, NM, The Gallery at Eissey Campus, Palm Beach, FL, and the Encaustic Institute, Cerrillos, NM, where her piece Untitled, #1, Inner Space Series was awarded Best of Show. She recently received a Fast Track Grant from the Arizona Commission for the Arts. Hymer has a 19 year old son who attends the University of Arizona in Tucson. She lives in the foothills of the Catalina Mountains overlooking Tucson with her dog Charlie and four desert tortoises.

CECELIA KANE

is nationally a exhibiting visual and performance artist with an MFA in Drawing and Painting from Georgia State University. She is a conceptualist working in a variety of media whose art addresses the nature of self. being and death. She



has been a curator, visiting artist, guest lecturer, community artist working with the homeless, a teacher and graphic producer for Georgia Pacific Corporation. She was the creator, artist and organizer of *Hand to Hand*, a collaborative project using gloves and hands to address the War in Iraq. This involved 196 national artists, approximately 2,000 artworks and 15 venues across the USA. Her most recent interest is in earthworks as personal landscapes.



P E T E R
B O N D E
B E C K E R
NELSON received his BA
in Studio Art
from St. Olaf
College in
2004 and his
MFA in Interdisciplinary

Visual Arts at the University of Washington in 2010. From 2010 to 2013, Peter taught at St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY.

He now teaches New Media at St. Olaf College, covering a variety of topics such as video art, animation, digital imaging, web art, 3D modeling and printing, and performance. Nelson has exhibited in such places as the Corcoran Gallery, Washington D.C.; The Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA; The University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA; Franklin Street Works, Stamford, CT; The College Art Association Conference, New York, NY; Walker's Point Center for the Arts, Milwaukee, WI; Minnesota Museum of American Art, St. Paul, MN; and the Pingyao International Photography Festival, Pingyao, China. Nelson was the recipient of the Graduating with Excellence Award from the University of Washington School of Art in 2010 and has received grants such as the 4Culture Individual Artist Project Grant (Seattle, WA) the Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant, and faculty development grants at St. Lawrence University. His work has been reviewed in national and

international publications. In addition to art, Peter sings and plays the mandolin with the indie-folk duo Jayber Crow.

DAVID
NOAH has been a photographer for many years, contributing photos to various shows in Athens and throughout Georgia. He



recently presented a one-man show of portrait photographs documenting the Word of Mouth poetry community in Athens. This show will travel to Emory University in March of this year. Though most of his work has been in street photography, and he looks to the classic street photographers for inspiration, his recent engagement with the poetry community has interested him in the relationship between image and group identity. He has taught web design at the Atlanta Art Institute and at the University of Georgia, where he received a PhD in Instructional Technology. His other interests include painting and poetry. He lives in Winterville, GA, with his wife, Sandy Bird, and four dogs, two cats, and six goats. He retired from the University of Georgia in 2012.

ANN ROWLES is currently a studio artist at the B-Complex in Atlanta, GA, she has exhibited widely in the USA as well as in Hungary and New Zealand. Her work is in the collections of The William King Regional Art Center in Abingdon, VA, and the North

Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching in Cullowhee, NC. Grants and awards include a fiveyear residency at the Atlanta



Contemporary Art Center, the North Carolina Arts Council Visual Artist Fellowship, a NC Arts Council Scholarship to the conference Public Art Dialogue Southeast, the Triangle Arts Award (Durham, NC) and the Emerging Artist Grant from the Durham Arts Council. Rowles received her MFA in Sculpture from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and has taught at UNC-Chapel Hill, NC Central University, Durham Technical Community College, and Western Carolina University.

Active in the Women's Art Movement since the 1980s, she has been a National Affiliate member of SOHO20 since 1992. Rowles is the co-founder of the Women's Caucus for Art of Georgia and has been on the National WCA Board of Directors since 2004. She previously served in multiple positions on the Board of Directors of Center/Gallery (Carrboro, NC), the Durham Art Guild (NC) and Tri State Sculptors Educational Association, (NC/SC/VA) and was a mentor in the ArtShare program of the Youth Art Connection and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta. (Photo Credit TW Meyer)



TATIANA
VENERUSO
was selected as
the new ATHICA
Director during
the run of this
exhibit.

She is an artist, designer, writer and collector living in Athens,

GA. Connecticut-born and South Florida-raised, she graduated with a BFA in illustration and sculpture from Savannah College of Art and Design (Savannah, GA) in 2004. Veneruso has worked in all capacities at ATHICA, as an artist, curator, and board member and served as interim Gallery Manager since Hope Hilton stepped down in November 2013.



LIZZIE ZUCKER SALTZ founded ATHICA in 2001 after familiarizing herself with the Athens art scene, writing art reviews and features for *Flagpole Magazine* from 1998 to 2000. She later wrote for the international, non-profit *Art Papers Magazine*, publishing reviews and news stories extensively from 1998 to 2003, with two feature articles published in 2005. Before founding ATHICA she worked as a freelance curator, in New York and later in Athens, on exhibits such as 2000's *Rock Art: An Exhibit Of Visual Art by Athens Musicians* (with Melissa Link) and *Eclectic Electric: An Exhibit Of Electronic And Digital Art*, both held at the Lyndon House Art Center. She has worked for many non-profit organizations on both coasts, as well as locally.

At ATHICA she curated 20 of the exhibits and oversaw another 25 before handing over the reins in Fall 2012. She received her B.A. from Barnard College of Columbia University in 1984 and her MFA from San Jose State University in 1993. She exhibited nationally as a sculptor and installation artist for the following decade. After moving to Athens, GA in 1997 with her spouse, David Z. Saltz—currently head of the UGA Department of Theatre & Film Studies—they collaborated on large-scale New Media projects which were exhibited at the Georgia Museum of Art (2000), The Sweeney Gallery in Riverside in CA (2002), Presbyterian College in SC and the Detroit MONA (2003). They have two children and four cats.



Affiliated Events

Friday, January 31, 8:00 PM

A Third Act Reading Night was organized by and included poems by David Noah (pictured right) & a short autobiographical essay by John English, as



well as readings by poets Bob Ambrose, Eugene Bianchi, Mark Bromberg and David Oates (pictured left). The event also included readings by Lizzie Z. Saltz of poems by Sara Baker and a short story by Lara Carrigan, and poems by Charlie Seagraves, read by David Oates.

Sunday, February 16, 2:30 PM

The Third Act Kid's Day included a gallery tour by curator Lizzie Z. Saltz and a drawing project based on Tom Hussey's photos created by Professor Brian Hitselberger, ATHICA Board member and Education Coordinator (pictured to right. Below, Board President Katherine McQueen with her son Lute.)



Wednesday, February 20, 2:00 PM

Contemplate the Bonus Years:

A Community Snapshot was part of the Reflecting, Sharing, Learning series organized by Van Burns of the ACC Library. During the hour-long event Mr. Burns created a video archive of the gallery walk-through and discussion held by Lizzie Z. Saltz and Anne P. Glass. The video will be available on their website in perpetuity (www.boomersinathens.org).

Sunday, February 23, 2:30 — 5:00 p.m.

The *Symposium on Contemplating Aging* will be moderated and organized by Melissa Armstrong, Master of Social Work Student and Anne P. Glass of the UGA Institute of Gerontology. It will include presentations by Dr. Eugene C. Bianchi, Professor of Religion Emeritus, Emory University; Rabbi Dr. Ronald Gerson, Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation Children of Israel; Dr. Leonard W. Poon, Professor Emeritus and Former Director, UGA Institute of Gerontology; as well as discussions with the audience.

Sunday, March 2, 4:30 — 6:00 p.m.

A presentation by author Deanna Sirlin on her new book, *She's Got What it Takes: American Women Artists in Dialogue* (in which she interviews mature women artists who influenced her), will be followed by an Artists' Panel moderated by Lizzie Z. Saltz. Out-of-town and regional artists will be in attendance, including Malena Bergmann, John English, Lisa Freeman, Karen Hymer, Cecelia Kane (pictured to the right), David Noah and Ann Rowles.



CATALOG PRODUCTION CREDITS

All photography of events are courtesy Wayne Bellamy & all installation shots are courtesy Wingate Downs.

Otherwise all photos of artworks were provided by the artists. We are extremely grateful for these fine photographers' invaluable contributions.

Catalog design & layout by Lizzie Zucker Saltz.

Proofreading & editing by Lara Carrigan.

Additional contributions and suggestions appear within from Dr. Anne P. Glass, who, along with Institute of Gerontology intern Melissa Armstrong, provided research support for the statistics and information references on the Artist Pages (6–23), which also appeared on wall texts that accompanied the works thoughout the exhibition.

Credit is also due Dr. Glass for her selection of pull quotes, which appeared as wall texts in the exhibition space near the artists' on whose pages those texts appear in this catalog.

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DonByramArt for pro-bono handcrafted framing of Tom Hussey's photographs (donbyramart.com).

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CITATIONS FOR PULL QUOTES:

Page 4— Glass, A. P. & Vander Plaats, R. S. (2013). A conceptual model for aging better together intentionally. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 27(4), 428-442.

Page 6—Newland, S. B. (1993). *How we die: Reflections on life's final chapter* (p. 265). New York, NY: Vintage

Page 10—Wolf, N. (2002). *The beauty myth: How images of beauty are used against women* (p. 177). New York, NY: HarperCollins

Page 12—Dean, D. (2006). *The madonnas of Leningrad* (p. 119). New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Page 14—Lamott, A. (2007). *Grace (eventually): Thoughts on faith* (p. 76). New York, NY: Riverhead Books.

Page 16—Kane, C. (2013). *Mother Hole Artist Statement*, self-published.

Page 18—Nelson, P. (2013) *On Dying Artist Statement*, self-published.

Page 20—Cohen, G. D. (2000). *The creative age: Awakening human potential in the second half of life* (p. 77). New York, NY: Avon Books.

Page 22—Atwood, M. (2001). *Good bones and simple murders* (163-164). New York, NY: Doubleday.

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