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d'Art Center Gears up for *Strive*: A National Exhibition Highlighting American Immigration and the American Dream

It's been a jam-packed summer full of art camp, exhibitions, and ceramic programming at d'Art this year and there is more to come!

Norfolk VA - D'Art Center will host its opening reception for *Strive*, a National Exhibition Highlighting American Immigration and the American Dream in its Main Gallery on Thursday July 25th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. Awards will be announced at 6:15. The call for artists for *Strive* reached 30 states for a total of 236 submissions. The exhibition was curated by d'Art staff and juried by Solomon Isekeije, the head of Norfolk State University's Art Department. 38 works from 36 artists representing 17 states were selected for the show, including 5 from Virginia.

"The vision was to curate a national show that highlighted the topic of immigration and the pursuit of the American dream that gave both artists and immigrants a chance to exhibit the topic in an expressive way," said Amanda Bradley, d'Art Center's Graphics, Communications, and Gallery Manager. "The span of submissions of different artistic mediums and high-quality work from all over the country was stunning."

Born in Lagos, Nigeria, Solomon Isekeije studied fine arts at Obafemi Awolowo University in the country's Osun State. He studied sculpture with Agbola Folarin and printmaking with Bruce Onobrakeya and Lamidi Fakeye. He graduated with a BFA degree in 1992 and obtained his MFA degree from Old Dominion University and Norfolk State University in 2002 with specializations in Printmaking and Mixed Media. Isekeije's works of art have been shown in juried exhibitions worldwide including Tokyo Japan and Daegu City South Korea, where he received the Distinguished Arts Award. "The artworks offer new definitions on the subject of geographical national boundaries and transcultural migration, while placing the viewer in the vulnerable position of immigrants who endure untold hardship in their quest for liberty and freedom," said Isekeije. "After viewing this exhibitions, you will surely become an active

participant in the debate about immigration in America.”

The *Strive* exhibition will be open July 25th through August 31st.

In addition to the two national exhibitions that d'Art has curated this summer, d'Art has been busy setting up its ceramics programming. The center received a major donation earlier this year to get the ceramics studio up and running and purchase a new kiln. “The launch of our new ceramics programming is an exciting step forward for d'Art, bringing back an aspect of our center that we lost in the explosion a few years ago,” says Tina McRae, d'Art Center's Board Chair. “After a lot of hard work from our staff, we have some really exciting class offerings that I think will appeal to a wide range of our community.”

D'Art offers ceramic classes, one day ceramic workshops, kiln firing rentals, and studio membership programs. “The ceramics studio has been a wonderful addition to our summer camp program this year,” says Phyllis Fedele, d'Art Center's Summer Camp Coordinator “we had over 90 children sign up for camp this year and they have really enjoyed getting their hands in the mud!”

Later this summer, d'Art Center will host its d'Art Fair on Saturday, August 24th, 11am - 3pm. The center's resident and associate artists will be onsite, and the fair will include art for sale, art demonstrations in glass, paint pouring, and woodworking, food trucks, local beer, and live art production which will be raffled off at the end of the event. The *Strive* exhibition will still be open as well.

Located in the NEON district, d'Art has proudly served the greater Hampton Roads area for over 30 years by connecting the community with the visual arts. The d'Art Center is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, houses 25 professional working artists and studios, and offers art education, programming, outreach, exhibitions, and events, many of which are free and open to the public.



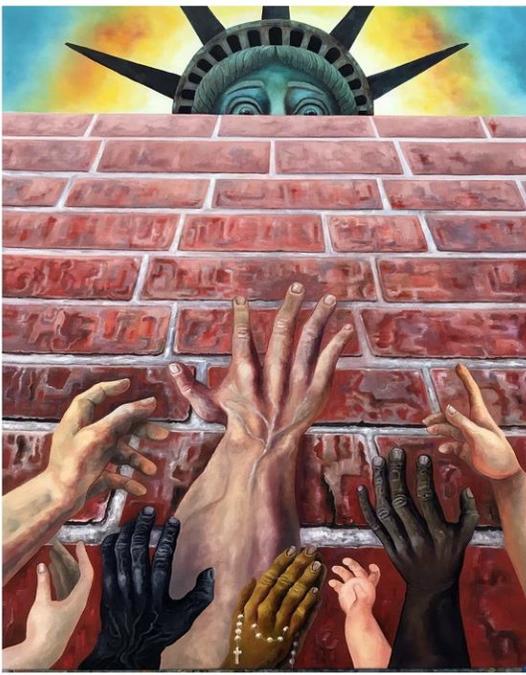
d' Art Board of Directors and Staff with New Kiln, from left to right Holly Graves (Programs and Community Outreach Coordinator), Shayn Fernandez, Elizabeth Lloyd, Deborah Gill, Brittany Tilley Hanson, Thomas Bernstein, Tina McRae (Board Chair), and Eileen Gwaltney (Treasurer)



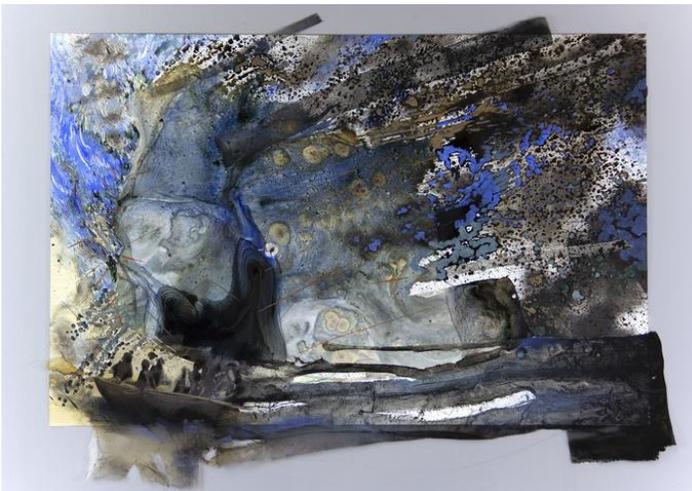
Summer Campers enjoying d' Art Center's Ceramic Studio during Art and Math week



Chemistry Brothers by Nicole Cimmiyotti from Hermiston, Oregon. Part of the *Strive* Exhibition.



Grasping for Freedom, Grasping for Hope by Raul Manzano from New York, New York. Part of the *Strive* Exhibition.



The Endless Sea by Quoc Trung Nguyen from Charlotte, North Carolina. Part of the *Strive* Exhibition.