



MORE

ART AND CULTURE / VISUAL ART / DECEMBER 29, 2014

BmoreArt's Best of 2014: Ian MacLean Davis's



Shifting Light: An Carol Miller Frost

Exploring the lur
ambiguity, and r
space, Carol Fro
Light" is a body c

Best of 2014



[+](#) SHARE [f](#) [t](#) [e](#) ...

**GET BMOREART'S WEEKLY
NEWSLETTER**

This season, BmoreArt will feature Top Ten Lists of 2014 from a number of our contributors in a range of art, culture, media, design, events, pop culture, and anything else they care to include.

Author **Ian MacLean Davis** is a Baltimore-based artist and instructor and has been a regular contributor to BmoreArt for several years.

Email address:

[SIGN UP](#)

MICA GRAD SHOW 2015





Best Gallery Homecoming: Maryland Art Place

Established in 2012, the Bromo Arts & Entertainment District in Westside Downtown Baltimore launched on the hardscrabble backs of Current Gallery, the H&H Building gallery venues, and other artist-run spaces on Franklin Street that have invigorating the area with arts activity for years (Hippodrome Theater notwithstanding.) This year **Maryland Art Place** finally divested itself of the beautiful, but awkwardly corporate home at Power Plant Live! on Water Street and returned to 218 West Saratoga St. where they previously resided from 1986-2001.



**MICA
GRAD
SHOW
2015**

**Re-imagining
the future of
contemporary
art and design.**

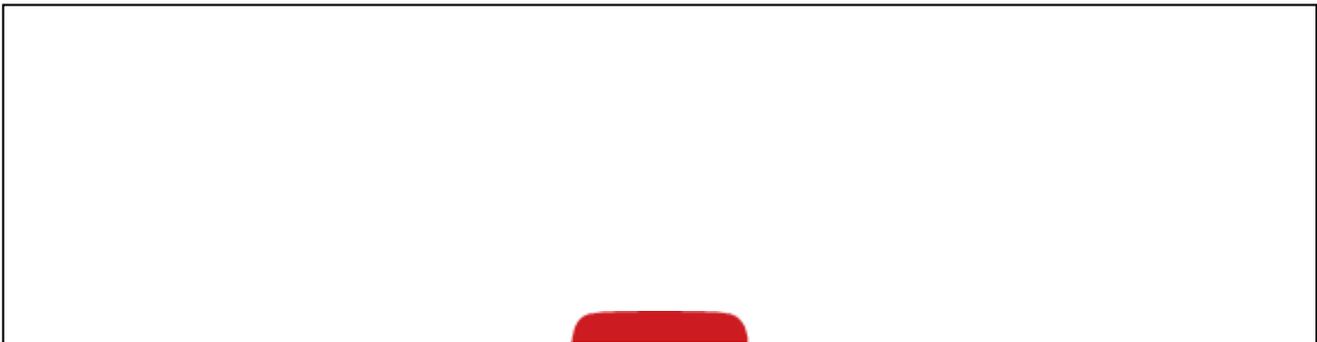
View full schedule at
mlicagradshow.com

MICA

This year, major renovations of the ground floor main space (bye-bye awkward closet in the middle of the room!) and further construction in the upper floors for offices and new tenants – including Jordan Faye Contemporary – have the potential to gift the Bromo District with an institutional anchor space for flourishing arts events and public programming in the neighborhood. Renovations aside, the staff of MAP has proven itself committed to working with neighboring independent galleries and BOPA to promote arts in the district.

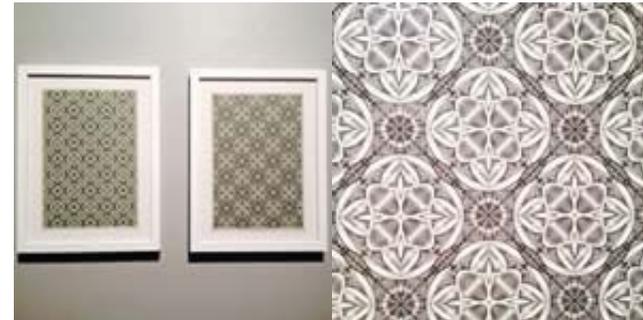
Welcome back! You're looking good and I'm excited to see how your programming and presence continues to transform in the New Year.

<><><><>



MFA Candidates and Exhibition Schedule here.

INSTAGRAM PHOTOS





Best Hard-to-Categorize Visiting Musicians: San Fermin

When San Fermin played Metro Gallery in March, they arrived following a triumphant reception at SXSW in Austin, TX. Baltimore was their last stop on a months-long tour leg before returning to comfortable homebound-venues of Brooklyn. Greeted by the C-86 Smiths-y buzz-pop of locals Joy Classic, the crowd at Metro that night weren't exactly COLD to the group, but there was a palpable sense of confusion and then acceptance of the group. Saddled by music press with the terribly-coined genre label of "Chamber Pop" (too close to a synonym of "bedpan" for my tastes, signifying nothing), composer/lyricist Ellis Ludwig-Leone's multi-vocal, multi-instrumental group is hard to classify.

UPCOMING EVENTS

JUN

3

Wed

2015

(<http://bmoreart.com/baltimore-art-events/action~oneday>)

all-day American Crazy Quilts @ The BMA @ Baltimore Museum of Art (http://bmoreart.com/event/american-crazy-quilts-the-bma?instance_id=2374)

Soulful and soaring male/female trade-off leads and harmonies combine with precisely-orchestrated trumpet, saxophone, violin, beats and keys to carry Ludwig-Leone's honest and searching lyrics, which like the best Pop music transcend age and time to convey simple honesty and heart. Sophomore slump be damned, I'll be looking forward to what comes next, and hope to see them again in such an intimate venue. I anticipate the room and crowd will be substantially larger next time. Listen to their NPR Tiny Desk Concert [here](#).

<><><><>

/exact_date~3-6-2015/

JUN
5
Fri
2015
(http://bmoreart.com/baltimore-art-events/action~oneday/exact_date~5-6-2015/)

8:00 pm Bumper Jacksons Album Release Pa... @ The Creative Alliance (http://bmoreart.com/event/bumper-jacksons-album-release-party-creative-alliance?instance_id=2392)

View Calendar → (http://bmoreart.com/baltimore-art-events/tag_ids~7404/)



BMOREART IS NAMED BEST CULTURAL RESOURCE!



Best Way To Practically Experience A Boondoggle: Graham Coreil-Allen's New Public Sites



Baltimore Magazine has awarded us a "Best of Baltimore" title in their 2014 August Issue!

BMOREART'S PICKS



**BmoreArt's Picks:
Baltimore Art**

Graham Coreil-Allen has made it his mission to be a cultural archaeologist for urban spaces, particularly in his current home of Baltimore. Through his “New Public Sites” project, Coreil-Allen offers anyone who wishes to participate the opportunity to get out of their cars and interact with the pockets of our city generally passed through on the way to more gentrified areas, as well as their residents.

With a background of both Architecture and Fine Art, Graham isn't particularly interested in producing gallery-ready art as much as exposing the history, function and potential of public spaces.

Among his projects his year were foot-and-bike lead tours of the perennially to-be-redeveloped Old Town Mall, the partially-dismantled I-170 “Highway To Nowhere” and even the Power Plant Live mall complex; offering visitors a historical and intellectually-distant perspective on the history, development and function of public spaces. Regardless of the neighborhood, what is meaningful about the experience he creates is how participants become cultural explorers through his enthusiasm to interact with the spaces and their people. Visiting a place is one thing, but

Galleries, Openings,...

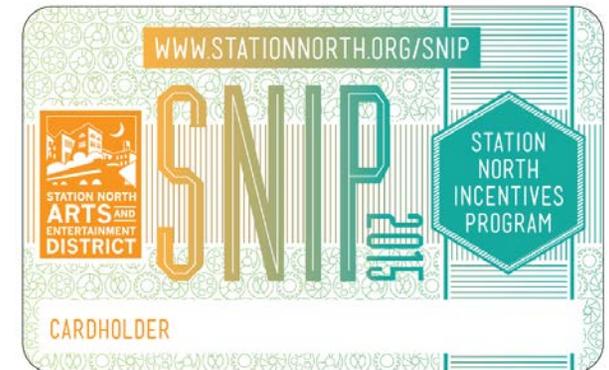
JUNE 2, 2015



**Bmore Music
Picks: Baltimore
Music, Concerts,
and Events...**

JUNE 2, 2015

STATION NORTH SNIP CARD!



\$35 helps to support Station North programming and gets

discussing the history and present circumstance with business-owners and residents, on-site and among strangers, is fundamentally enriching and worth seeking out.

you discounts at a number of SN businesses!



FIND US ON FACEBOOK





Best Reason To Stay Out Late In Station North: The Crown

The Station North Arts District is 12 years old this year. To be an “arts district” means Baltimore City (itself a County) defined the area bounded by Howard Street to the West, Greenmount Avenue to the East, Oliver Street to the South and (roughly) 20th Street to the North and and (roughly) 20th Street to the North as a financially-supported area to foster arts-related businesses,



Bmoreart

Like You like this.



Bmoreart shared Jessilyn Park Art Studio's photo.

5 hrs



You and 2,777 others like Bmoreart.



Facebook social plugin

work/live spaces and exhibition spaces/galleries.

Most notably, the North Avenue been transformed by the Station North initiative. The area surrounding The Charles Theater and Club Charles has long been an appreciated draw for the area. When more the more adventurous are exiting a late show at The Charles, when Club Chuck is often too-crowded and loud, the best place to retreat to is The Crown. Just north of North Avenue, in the building formerly known as the pickup point for the MVP “Koreatown” Bus Line, The Crown has established itself as a venue for local and national post-warehouse music performances, cool retro-soul-glam DJ nights, as well as tasty Korean-inspired pub food. The Red Room is usually the location for live music gigs, dance parties and a cheap cover charge, but if your mood is more chill, the Blue Room is often available when looking for a solid brew, kim-chi burger and spinning disks. Gratefully, Station North offers a several other bar/restaurants for late-night service. But if you’re looking for an alternative to Club Charles, The Crown delivers in spades.

<><><><><><>

OTHER PEOPLES PIXELS



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- The Artist Statement
- Bad Reviews: How To Handle Them
- Opening Your Studio
- Is an MFA worth the Price Tag?
- Press Etiquette
- The Artist Resume
- Jerry Saltz is a Cat Person



Best Place To See Out-of-town Artists Challenging The Definition of Art: Lease Agreement

It takes a long time for an emerging artist culture to develop a cultural presence confident enough to welcome in outside voices, which is why many "scenes" feel so insular. In the past decade or so, Baltimore has achieved such autonomy, thanks to the breakdown of the walls that insulate our "city of neighborhoods"

The Big C: Copyright for Visual Artists?

Professional Development

The Vanity Gallery: Avoid Them

A Guide To Artist Residencies

How to Price and Sell Your Work

Is it Ok to Exhibit in Restaurants?

Making a Living as an Artist

10 Questions to Ask When Choosing an Art College

Why (Some) Artists Should Buy Real Estate

SINGLE CARROT THEATRE

from each other. Increasingly, grassroots venues are inviting like-minded artists from out-of-town to initiate a dialogue for local to can engage with.

For over 2 years, Adam Farcus and Allison Yasukawa have offered the front two rooms of their Ednor Gardens row-house rental to artists and curators as the project space **Lease Agreement**, largely from out-of-town. Their curatorial focus is artist-driven and skews conceptually towards the prosaic, resulting in often challenging and cerebral exhibits hewed by the domestic space. In their white-washed Living and Sun-Room spaces, Lease Agreement curates only in their invitation to participating artists; beyond that style of presentation and selection of work is left largely up to the visiting creators/curators. This combination of curatorial freedom and residential venue often results in engaging dissonance. For instance, a sculptural installation consisting of a commercially-available humidifier blowing steam on a mirror would have a different read in a museum or gallery than a living room, no matter how white-walled. Life-scaled photos of pooka-shell chandeliers evoke a kitschy 1970's vibe transformed by the humble 1930's architecture of the space in a way that the



STATION NORTH CSA



antiseptic of a gallery or museum would not.

What do we make of a tall, neat stack of rainbow-colored printer paper dusted with fine glitter-dust, as Farcus & Yasukawa's cat strolls by, tail swinging? There's an intriguing tension that results from the collision/marriage of domestic space and conceptual fine art that is fostered here. Lease Agreement is far from the only venue/org to initiate this conversation in Baltimore, but all factors considered, it is the one which over the past year has consistently merged these qualities and given visiting artists the freedom to fail in all the best ways to foster dialogue and growth.



**DONATE TO BMOREART &
WE'LL SEND YOU A STICKER!**



Make a tax-deductible donation today to Bmoreart through our fiscal sponsor, Fractured Atlas. Send us your address and we'll send you our new logo to proudly display on your car or



Best Roaming Curatorial Collective: ICA Baltimore

In its two-year existence, the [Institute of Contemporary Art, Baltimore](#) has been prolific in the shows they've put together. The scope has varied greatly, as has the manner of presentation.

another special surface.

BLOGROLL

[Art Biz Blog](#)

[Art Blog](#)

[Art Fag City](#)

[Artcritical](#)

[Big Red and Shiny](#)

[Booooooom!](#)

[BOPA Arts Blog](#)

[Brine](#)

[Brown Paper Bag](#)

[BurnAway](#)

[City Paper Noise Blog](#)

[Daily Serving](#)

This year they organized five exhibitions across 5 venues, each smart, ambitious and engaging. That's the great thing about ICA – they function as a curatorial umbrella and support-system for artists to work with and under with a confidence that the practical elements of space prep and promotion are taken care of.

The de-centralized “pop-up” model is a vital component to contemporary curation, where branding has largely replaced a fixed physical location. However, not having a consistent exhibition space still poses challenges for a venue working to develop an identity. The floating and varied nature of ICA projects allows for partnerships with different emerging and established artist-run venues in the city to almost render their organization invisible. Quality becomes the identifier. This year they sponsored solid shows at Platform Gallery, Station North Chicken Box, The Broom Factory, Current Gallery and D center – so professionally mounted that I hesitated to declare them “Most Humble & Unrecognized Curatorial Collective.”

<><><><><><>

- Glasstire
- Hyperallergic
- Joanne Mattera Art Blog
- New American Paintings Blog
- Newsgrist
- Post-Office Arts Journal
- Printeresting
- Showspace
- Strangers With Style
- Temporary Review
- The Art Newspaper
- Two Coats of Paint
- Winkleman NY

BMOREART T'S ARE HERE!



Best Arty Sci-Fi Film: Jonathan Glaser's "Under The Skin"

Jonathan Glaser's "Under The Skin" opens with a prolonged, pitch-black screen, effectively dilating viewers' eyes, priming them for blinding bursts of abstract white geometry which imply alien spacecraft, construction and invasion. These visuals are



Wear your BmoreArt pride!
Click the image for more info.

RECENT POSTS

accompanied by shrieking low strings. This abstract shock is a proper introduction what sort of film this is – one which propels viewers through a search for narrative in the subsequent 108 minutes. In her most daring role, Scarlett Johansson methodically, repeatedly cruises Glasgow suburbs charming men with robotic precision, leading them to a terminal fate which reveals itself bit by bit through the first half of the film.

Mica Levi’s dissonant soundtrack and the thick brogues of the many non-actors delivering dialogue reinforce a extraterrestrial, and disconcerting mood. Few films keep you searching for the narrative and allow for the experience of the film to wash over you as “Under The Skin.” As an inter-stellar seductress (Johansson) trolling small-town Scotland for men to destroy and absorb for mysterious means. Gradually, our understanding of her mission and hers of humanity grows. We follow her alien perspective and we gradually discover her goals while she learns the ugliness and tragedy of humanity. In the theater it was an immersive audio-visual experience. Sadly, most will see the film via Amazon Prime or Netflix. If you can project it in your home theater and turn the lights down very low, it might come close to emulating the



“A Monumental Baking Competition” - Call

for Entry

JUN 2, 2015



Scene Seen: Guest Spot at the ReInstitute and

Current

JUN 2, 2015



BmoreArt’s Picks: Baltimore Art Galleries,

Openings, and Events June 3 - 7

JUN 2, 2015

RECENT COMMENTS

experience of seeing it in the theater. I'm fine with not seeing a film like "Interstellar" in the theater, but ecstatic that I saw this one in a dark, low auditorium. This is a rare film that reminds that going to the movies doesn't need to be an epic spectacle to be engrossing and moving, and maybe it shouldn't be.

<><><><><>



Best Fine Art Disney World (without rides): Jeff Koons Retrospective at The Whitney

Personal Branding | In Terms Of on Recasting the Past: Hank Willis Thomas in South Africa

J on Baker Artist Awards Choose Three Male Winners for a Second Year in a Row

Go & See: Tuesday 4 – Monday 10 February on Photos from Material Girls at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum

WE'RE MOVING! | Sebastian Martorana on Living Marble: A Contemporary-Historical Collaboration at The Walters

Long Live SiteLines! | New Public Sites on Uncanny Urbanism: Graham Coreil Allen's New Public Sites

Say what we will about the function of major metropolitan Museums and what is generally going on at The Whitney, but their final exhibition, Jeff Koons' career retrospective, was a glorious spectacle. At every stage of his career Koons has shown a keen eye to pinpoint most attractive elements of the visuals he appropriates and find ingenious ways to tweak them; amplifying their most ridiculous qualities. Walking among over 35 years of such visually-stimulating sculptures, prints and paintings instilled an intoxicating delirium: it cut through the overly-intellectual burden that accompanies massively "important" shows. The experience of leaving the museum was similar to walking out of a casino: a sense of elation which fleetingly leads to exhaustion and emptiness. It called to mind my experience in Orlando at 11 years old. I was exhilarated, tired and confused. Time will tell if the memory resonates beyond that. My friend observed upon exiting the show, "Koons may be the greatest production designer to never work in commercial film or advertising." That seems appropriate. Uncle Walt, meet Cousin Jeff.

<><><><><>



Best Fictional Documentary: “20,000 Days on Earth”

In Nicholas Roeg’s film “The Man Who Fell To Earth” (1976), there is a critical scene where David Bowie, as the titular alien character, stands in front of a wide bathroom mirror examining himself, while his face is distorted in an adjacent magnifying mirror. In the following scene, he reveals his true extraterrestrial nature to the audience and his girlfriend. “20,000 Days on Earth,” a film about musician Nick Cave re-stages that scene in its first minutes, while Cave narrates existential thoughts in voice-over.

Twenty or so minutes later, he is shown in discussion with a “therapist” about his father, with base makeup clearly staining the edge of his stiffly-starched shirt collar. You realize then, if the bathroom scene did not yet “click”: even as he rolled out of bed and examined himself in the bathroom mirror, he was already dressed in cosmetics. Falseness and “truth” weave together throughout the film in such a way that illuminates both Cave the artist and person, but never clearly defining either.

Structured as a “day in the life” of Cave, he travels around (it

seems) his current city of Bristol, England by car from one location to another, accompanied by friends and musical partners that magically appear and vanish from passenger seats to riff with him about their history and the nature of creativity. Ultimately, tethering to any cohesive sense of time and space is futile – towards the end we clearly jump from the UK to Australia with no thread to lead us. Nick Cave can be divisive as a musician. I'm only a casually-aware fan, but suggest that even though there are extended performance sequences in the film, it's not necessary to be a fan to find the film compelling, as his story, personality and the filmic presentation are enough to draw you in. It's just a good movie illustrating an interesting life. But enjoying Cave's music certainly does help.

<><><><><>



Best Episodic Show About Loveable Narcissists: Transparent

To be fair, most TV shows are populated by narcissists. As viewers, we enjoy investing in worlds populated by people who are self-obsessed; as that is the stuff of comedy and drama, but also justifies and mitigates our own naval-gazing. The thing about

“Transparent” (produced by and available exclusively via Amazon.com) is not just that the story is interesting, or that characters are dynamic, but how their individual stories and histories unfold.

Jeffrey Tambor (“Arrested Development”, in another unexpected career-defining role) plays the patriarch of a typically modern family; divorced, dysfunctional and emotionally confused. As the anchor character for this dramedy, we follow Tambor’s character through her “coming out” as a transgendered person. (Here, you groan on the pun of the show title, with forgiveness.) His family – ex-wife, daughter, son and daughter (in order of age) – are presented as flawed and themselves self-searching even before he re-introduces himself to them as “Maura.”

What’s interesting about the series is not only the transgender hook – the journey of Tambor’s character – but how the entire family, presumably “normal” if upper-middle-class, are also still searching to resolve their own identities well into their 20’s, 30’s and 60’s; and how the narrative of Maura’s long journey to acceptance subtly affected their paths. Stocked with a stellar cast

of familiar character actors (Hey! That's Angela from "Who's The Boss!" Huh? Is that the little girl from "Uncle Buck?" What? That's that..."West Wing" guy?), the narrative hops through time to reveal how one generation's choices affect the next in the long game, but more importantly, how self-definition pairs with self-acceptance, driving our lives but never quite landing on a firm target.

Tags: BmoreArt Best of 2014 Ian MacLean Davis



Previous Post

Shifting Light: An Interview
with Carol Miller Frost by
Joan Cox

Next Post

Stephen F Austin University:
Texas National Competition
& Exhibition 2015 - Call for
Entry