

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crazy 8 Artists' Carnival showcases the work of eight Chicago artists working in a wide range of mediums and a wild range of techniques. Interpreting the themes of carnival, circus, and festival, the artists are joined by their exuberant delight in the visual and their unique reimagining of the world.

Paintings, drawings, sculpture, tile murals, installations and collage are some of the varied mediums they utilize to form their singular works of original art. Featuring artists Kass Copeland, Alan Emerson Hicks, IZZO, Anne Leuck, Edward Master, Jason Messinger, Anthony Stagg, and Joey Wozniak.

Curated by artist and curator Jason Messinger and Gallery Director and Dean of Arts Shelley Lamantia, the Crazy 8 Artists' Carnival runs from Sept 26 through Dec 23, 2016, at State Street Gallery at Robert Morris University, 401 S. State Street, Chicago IL. The gallery and all events are free and open to the public. Gallery Hours are Monday through Thursday, from 10am - 6pm. The free reception 'Jazz Café and Artist meet and greet' takes place Thursday Nov 17, 2016 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Website: Crazy8Art.com.

Kass Copeland creates large graphic photo collages referencing by-gone eras and surrealistic tableaux. Both droll and serious, her works are constructed with humorous juxtapositions and garish pleasures while weathered with rich patinas and haunting emotional complexity. They re-invent familiar themes from the circus and the carnival into nostalgic fever dreams. A true master of her materials, Copeland's artwork is a stage craft of delight.

Alan Emerson Hicks uses found plastic objects and heat-manipulated plastic detritus to create tightly corseted structures of complexity. In his hands ephemeral materials are transformed into complex latticed sculptures, elaborate airy costumes, and unique works of art. Hicks conjures the modern world's everyday plastic objects of dull invisibility into a bright parade of startling singularity and vision.

IZZO unleashes fantastic images on printed-pattern fabric that bridge foreground with background, abstraction with representation, and the flat plane with spatial depth. Alternately embellishing and obscuring the existing fabric patterns, this suite of works focuses on the idea of dizzying love. IZZO fashions images into funhouse rides of joyful exuberance.

Anne Leuck uses her emotional and observed life as a jumping off point to create narratives that charm with their fresh immediacy and universal joy. Using crisp bold colors and a signature graphic style, she exposes a world both intimate and newly seen. In this collection she renders sideshow banners out of her own anxieties of physical aging. Leuck turns her own vulnerabilities into sideshow marvels of the human condition.

Edward Master paints hallucinatory patterned visions astounding in their complexity and richness, referencing natural and man-made motifs, along with decorative and ornamental traditions. With a bewildering level of detail one seemingly hovers above the work, sensing both a microscopic viewpoint and an overwhelming vastness. Swooping in layered complexity, Master's artworks are a carnival ride for the eye.

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Jason Messinger creates ceramic tile murals and sculptures of bright colors and wry content. His sculptures twist and turn with organic yearning and figurative sensibility, creating abstract interpretations of famous sideshow acts. His tile murals vibrate between sneaky humor and abstract beauty - commenting on the lexicons of the circus and the carnival. Utilizing the materials of ceramic and richly colored glazes, Messinger's artwork is its own circus act.

Anthony Stagg allows his artwork to speak in the language of the street, utilizing tropes as far ranging as graffiti styles to comic book archetypes. Melding pop culture references with fantastical vignettes, the artist exposes a wry observation of the modern world. His non-judgmental viewpoint is both open and humorous, retro and contemporary. Stagg invites you into his own festival of life.

Joey Wozniak pushes, scrapes and layers vibrant color paints to create densely rendered landscapes with an underlying energy bursting below the surface. Bridging a physical approach to the physicality of paint with a masterful understanding of the stimulus of color, the artist crafts joyful scenes in riotous hues. Rich with references to classical architecture and peopled with characters from a wide sampling of cultures, Wozniak constructs his own unique post-modern jubilees.

Crazy 8 Artists' Carnival

State Street Gallery

@ Robert Morris University

401 S. State Street, Chicago IL

Gallery hours: Monday - Thursday, 10 am - 6 pm

Show Runs: Sept. 26 - Dec. 23, 2016

Jazz Café and Artist meet and greet Reception: Thur. Nov 17 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Show Website: Crazy8Art.com

Gallery Website: Experientialart.org/Programs/gallery.html

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Photos available upon request