

FRONT

<https://2017.micagrashow.com>
www.artcitybaltimore.com

For additional information/press images, please contact
Betty Gonzales: 410-703-8985 | info@artcitybaltimore.com

FRONT

April 2017- Ongoing

Opening Reception:
Saturday, April 22 (6pm)

Walking Tours:
Saturday, April 22 (4-6pm)
Saturday, April 29 (2-4pm)

Featuring:
PRECIOUS BLAKE
WILSON BUTTERWORTH
GRAHAM COREIL-ALLEN
BRIAN DAVIS
FREESPACE COLLECTIVE
OLIVIA WEISE



Baltimore, MD, April 22, 2017 – This spring, The Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and Art City Baltimore are proud to present the thesis exhibition FRONT, a five-person project featuring new works by Graham Coreil-Allen, Precious Blake, Brian Davis, and FreeSpace Collective members Billy Friebele and Michael Dax Iacovone. This exhibition is curated by 2017 MFA candidate and emerging curator Betty Gonzales. Inspired by creative placemaking efforts initiated in Baltimore by organizations looking to spark life in certain parts of the city, FRONT is a series of events and artworks intended to address issues of urban renewal by reimagining vacant storefronts and buildings throughout the Bromo Arts and Entertainment District.

The aim of this project is to ignite conversations and awareness of various spaces within the Bromo Arts District by providing multiple ways of experiencing and discussing the people, places, and history whose character and culture is now at stake with the amount of proposals for new development within the designated arts district. Artists, community members, and visitors are encouraged to walk through and interact with the spaces and people around them that are intended to enrich their understanding and appreciation of one of Baltimore's youngest Arts and Entertainment Districts.

Augmented reality (AR) is digital imagery superimposed over the viewer's environment in real time through the use of a geo location-based mobile application developed by Brian Davis and FreeSpace Collective. The works will spark the imagination of viewers while encouraging them to think more critically about their environment. AR can define spaces by providing a malleable approach to creative placemaking without physically altering a space. Using technology to redefine space by placing a virtual layer over the world with geographic specificity allows for the reimagining and reinventing of public spaces, and through that process, ownership of the streets can take place.

Public artist Graham Coreil-Allen will lead a two-part series of walking tours titled *Bromo Spectacular!* that will focus on the history, design & uses of key sites representative of the area's heritage, culture, and development. Participants are invited to join these New Public Sites walks to creatively explore the district's little known histories, urban design successes and challenges, and current artist-led redevelopment projects.

Front the book is an illustrated activity guide by Precious Blake that works in conjunction with Graham Coreil-Allen's *Bromo Spectacular!* walking tours. The guide is a coloring book, note taking pad and informational booklet. With written captions by Coreil-Allen, Blake vibrantly illustrates stops on the tour that particularly speak about the effects of urban architecture, modes of transport, and public spaces on social and racial inequalities in Baltimore City.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

PRECIOUS BLAKE is a visual journalist and cultural organizer living and working in Baltimore, Maryland. Precious received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration with a concentration in Printmaking at Maryland Institute College of Art. She is currently a 2016/17 Baltimore Corps Fellow and Development Assistant at Arts Every Day, a non-profit that advocates for arts education and access in Baltimore City Public Schools. Precious is dedicated to serving underrepresented artists in Baltimore through community programming, event organizing, and equitable access to arts education.

GRAHAM COREIL-ALLEN was born in Galveston, Texas and raised in Tampa, Florida. He studied at Tulane School of Architecture in New Orleans, completed his BA at New College of Florida in Sarasota, and received his MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art's Mount Royal School of Art in Baltimore, Maryland. The public artist has created public projects and programs for numerous organizations, places, and events both nationally and abroad, including Baltimore Office of Promotion and Arts, 99% Invisible, The Deitch/Creative Time Parade, and Washington Project for the Arts. Coreil-Allen was an invited artist in the US Pavilion at the 13th International Venice Architecture Biennale, was selected for an inaugural Rubys Artists Project Grant, and is a founding leader of Citizen Artist Baltimore.

BRIAN DAVIS lives and works in Northern Virginia. Born in Ft Walton Beach, Florida, Davis was raised in both Guam and South Carolina. He has taught New Media and Sculpture at The George Washington University and George Mason University. Davis has a BFA in General Studio from Winthrop University and a MFA in Sculpture from the University of Florida. He was recently awarded a Professional Fellowship at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

FREESPACE COLLECTIVE was founded by artists Billy Friebele and Michael Dax Iacovone who began working together on collaborative video projects in graduate school at the Maryland Institute College of Art 2008. FreeSpace Collective focuses on community engagement, public spaces, mapping, and interactivity with an emphasis on collaboration. They have exhibited in Detroit, MI; St. Louis, MO; Washington, DC; Baltimore, MD; Sarajevo, Bosnia; and Jatiwangi, Indonesia among other places. FreeSpace Collective is based in Washington, DC.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

BETTY GONZALES was born in San Antonio, Texas but has lived in Maryland for over 10 years. She majored in Studio Art with a minor in Art History from McDaniel College in Westminster, MD where she developed an interest in curating and community engagement as a gallery assistant on campus. Betty has an invested interest in the city of Baltimore, its people, and its unique art scene.

Bromo Spectacular! Dates:

Saturday, April 22 (4-6 pm)

Saturday, April 29 (2-4 pm)

<http://newpublicsites.org/sites/bromo/>

TOURS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Image Caption: Brian Davis, *OpenSpace*, 2017, *animated .gif*, courtesy of the artist.

This exhibition was made possible in part by MICA's MFA in Curatorial Practice program.

Art City Baltimore is an initiative that aims to connect artist communities with resources that encourage sustainable art practices, accountability to communities, and awareness of social impact.

Art City Baltimore | artcitybaltimore.com | info@artcitybaltimore.com