

Chris Peimann
Dir. of Marketing and Publicity
cpeimann@thesheldon.org
Ph: 314-533-9900 ext. 19

Olivia Lahs-Gonzales
Sheldon Art Galleries Director
olg@thesheldon.org
314-533-9900 ext. 31



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SHELDON ART GALLERIES PRESENTS MAJOR EXHIBITION OF WORK BY LARRY KRONE

ST. LOUIS, MO - The Sheldon Art Galleries presents *Larry Krone – The Best, Best Everything*, October 2, 2015 – January 9, 2016 in the Bellwether Gallery of St. Louis Artists. An opening celebration will be held on Friday, October 2 from 5-7 p.m., and the galleries will be open until 9 p.m. for First Fridays in Grand Center. The Sheldon Art Galleries are open Tuesdays, Noon – 8 p.m.; Wednesdays - Fridays, Noon – 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and one hour prior to Sheldon performances and during intermission. Admission is free. For more information on exhibitions, visit the galleries' website at TheSheldon.org.

This exhibition is sponsored in part by Barrett Barrera Projects, St. Louis and is organized by the Sheldon Art Galleries in collaboration with *Innovations in Textiles 10*, a regional collaborative event celebrating fiber art. Visit craftalliance.org for more information on *Innovations in Textiles 10*.

The Sheldon Art Galleries presents the first major exhibition of works by multi-media artist Larry Krone in St. Louis since 2006. Based in New York, the St. Louis-born artist has been making a name for himself nationally for his unique works that use found textiles, craft materials and graphics to challenge the notion of the artist as a privileged individual, separate and above the general society. His incorporation of finished needlepoints found in thrift stores, along with other ready-made textiles, mingles the artist's voice with that of unknown craftspeople. With conceptualism at the core of his practice, Krone uses these elements alongside obsessive handwork, layering songwriting, performance, graphic design, fashion and costume design together with traditional art object-making to explore and express his ideas about masculine identity, showmanship, beauty, sentimentality and love, individualism and its antithesis— collaboration.



The centerpiece of the exhibition is *Then and Now (Cape Collaboration)*, a tour-de-force work on which Krone spent 2 1/2 years. A monument to individuality and the complexities of human identity, the glittering, floor-length cape is made of found embroidered pieces and textiles stitched together in a kind of “crazy quilt” pattern, then hand-encrusted with hundreds of thousands of multicolored sequins. Other highlights include *Mean, Vicious, Wild*, 2013, a 23-foot wall hanging created from a Mylar party curtain in which the words “Mean, Vicious and Wild” were painstakingly created by the artist using only scissors and clear tape. The colors, process and scale of the piece are meant to communicate the conflicting feelings of pride, and shame in being “bad,” in the context of masculine identity. The words are taken from a passage of John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*.

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Also included in the exhibition are selections from an earlier series, *Love is in the Air*, that uses stock postcard images, posters and collaged pages from tourist magazines as a backdrop for the repeated hand-written words, “and I will always love you,” which is derived from the famous Dolly Parton song. This ongoing series, begun in 1993, aims to show that popular song lyrics and pretty pictures, though on cheap paper, can still convey true personal emotions and serious artistic expression. Collage plays a significant and ongoing role in Krone’s works— in the utilization of magazine images and in his use of found textiles. *New York Times* critic Holland Cotter has written of Krone, “Mr. Krone himself is something of a collage, as an artist, as a performer and as a personality projected through his art. He’s the Marlboro Man working as a seamstress; he’s Willie Nelson singing Tammy Wynette; he’s a folk art version of a stand-up comic.” Collectively, Krone’s works are a metaphor for the complexity of human personality and interchange. They are celebratory, obsessive and above all, playful and joyful.

Born in Chicago, Illinois in 1970, Krone was raised in St. Louis and now lives and works in New York City. He has exhibited his drawings, sculptures, installations and videos since the early 1990s at galleries and museums including The Whitney Museum of American Art, Philip Morris Branch; and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis which, in 2006 presented *Larry Krone: Artist/Entertainer*, a ten-year retrospective of his visual and performance work. As a performer, Krone has appeared at music and art venues in New York including Joe’s Pub, PS 122 and at The Whitney. Krone’s costume design and fabrication for his own performances has led to the creation of House of Larréon, his line of custom gowns and stage costumes, outfitting cabaret performers, dancers and rock singers including Bridget Everett, Neal Medlyn, Adrienne Truscott and Kathleen Hanna. Krone’s art book, *Look Book*, is planned for later 2015 with photographs by the designer Todd Oldham. Krone is a 2013 Millay Colony fellow, a 2011 and 2012 MacDowell Colony fellow, and a 2009 and 2015 New York Foundation for the Arts fellow.

Gallery Talk: Saturday, October 3, 2015, 11 a.m. Larry Krone will speak about his work. Admission free, but reservations are required. To reserve call Rebecca Gunter at 314-533-9900 x18 or email at rgunter@TheSheldon.org.

Another aspect of Krone’s work will be on view at **projects+gallery** in *Larry Krone - The Selling Sound of Country Music*, which opens the same night as the Sheldon Art Galleries exhibit on October 2, with a reception from 6-9 p.m. Located at 4733 McPherson Avenue in St. Louis’ Central West End, projects+gallery is a commercial art space designed to feature contemporary exhibitions and artists that blur the boundaries of traditionally understood artistic disciplines and practices.

The not-for-profit Sheldon Art Galleries exhibits works by local, national and international artists in all media. Over 6,000 square feet of the galleries’ spaces on the 2nd floor are permanently devoted to rotating exhibits of photography, architecture, jazz art and history and children’s art. A sculpture garden, seen from both the atrium lobby and the connecting glass bridge, features periodic rotations and installations, and the Nancy Spirtas Kranzberg Gallery on the lower level features art of all media. The Sheldon actively supports the work of St. Louis artists in all mediums and features a dedicated gallery with museum-quality exhibits by St. Louis artists, past and present.

Financial Assistance for this project has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency. Support is provided by the Regional Arts Commission and the Arts and Education Council.

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Image caption: Larry Krone, *Then and Now (Cape Collaboration)*, 2012, found embroidered fabric, sequins, beads, yarn, fabric, embroidery floss, approx. 58 x 35 x 11 inches, courtesy of the artist.