

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

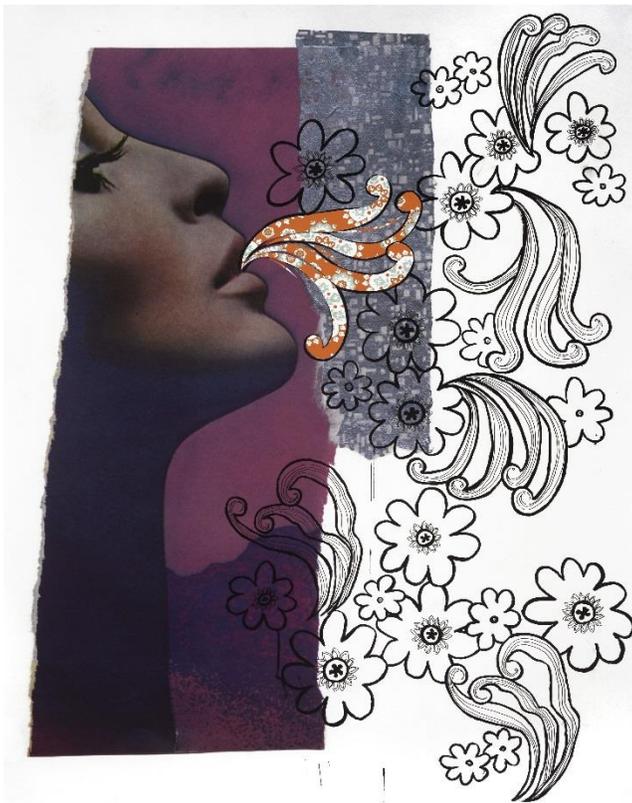


THE SHELDON
CONCERT HALL & ART GALLERIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 12, 2018

**SHELDON ART GALLERIES OPENS EXHIBIT OF LARGE-SCALE WORKS ON PAPER
BY MIXED MEDIA ARTIST DEBORAH DOUGLAS**

ST. LOUIS, MO - The Sheldon Art Galleries presents *Deborah Douglas: Past, Present, Future Tense*, March 2 – April 21, 2018 in the Bellwether Gallery of St. Louis Artists. **An opening reception is scheduled for Friday, March 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. *The exhibition is made possible in part by Elissa and Paul Cahn.*



Gallery Talk: Tuesday, April 10, 2018, 6 p.m. Deborah Douglas speaks about her work and influences. Admission free. Reservations are suggested but not required. Contact Paula Lincoln at plincoln@thesheldon.org or 314-533-9900 x37.

A mixed media artist, Deborah Douglas is a storyteller who works with a variety of materials, including oil, enamel, watercolor, ink, graphite, collage, and digital prints made from collage, and photography, both her own and found, to create works on paper that speak to cultural and societal issues of gender and sexual equality, as well as the conditions of excess, longing and loss. Douglas addresses those issues sometimes darkly, sometimes with humor— though often with both—and walks a line between articulating the tragic and the joyful absurdity of everyday life. Her use of decorative patterns and/or text in her often large-scale works on paper create another layer of form and meaning. Fabric and wall paper patterns, old advertising labels and magazines, and an array of

period source material from her life, make reference to a cultural past, to relationships and to invented narratives. This “storytelling,” based heavily in a creative license, is influenced by the retelling or bending of facts on many levels. While no one piece on its own is autobiographical, one can argue that all of the works are exactly that.

MORE...

Appropriating images of this nature and combining them with formal passages, Douglas works to create a subtle tension while maintaining a visual appeal. The blending of a variety of imagery and the realization of creating a narrative that is not immediately obvious; this lateral thinking and seemingly disparate associations, create the basis of her art. She presents these things through a lens of a nostalgic past, of longing and of loss, of high and low art and its history, and of popular culture. Word play and the suggestion of multiple meanings serve as a way to layer ideas, while specific fonts, and the compositional arrangement of text, provide a visual balance to the work.

Words serve an equally important role as that of color, pattern or image. The body of work for *Past, Present, Future Tense*, (a reference to both grammatical and personal tensions that we live with on a daily basis) focuses on a series of images from her own past, real, imagined or both. Douglas' own life history plays a significant role, but so do figures who anonymously stand for specific issues such as equal rights of women, of people of color, of the LGBTQ+ community, of immigrants and the working class. With that in mind, Douglas is able to isolate and associate aspects of her life with broader societal issues, portraying vulnerability, resilience and empathy for herself, and for those around her.

Deborah Douglas received her Bachelor of Arts from Truman State University and Master of Fine Arts in Painting and Printmaking from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. Since that time she has taught both Art History and Studio Art. Douglas is currently an Associate Professor of Art and Art History at Saint Louis University. Her work has been reviewed in publications including the *Kansas City Star*, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Intermission Magazine*, the *Riverfront Times*, *The Beacon*, and the *Columbia Daily Tribune*. Douglas has served as a juror for numerous professional and student art exhibitions. She has exhibited extensively both regionally and nationally, including Dallas, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, and Raleigh, North Carolina. Most recently, she has participated in *The Imagery of Chess: Saint Louis Artists*, an invitational exhibition at the World Chess Hall of Fame and Museum, the 10th Anniversary Exhibition of the Exposure Series at the 210 Gallery, University of Missouri-St. Louis, and had a solo exhibition, *Alternative Facts (1965-2017)*, at the Schmidt Art Center in Belleville, Illinois.

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, music 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 to the galleries are provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency and by the Regional Arts Commission and the Arts and Education Council.

#

Image caption: Deborah Douglas, *Your Latest Obsession*, 44 x 56", 2017, digital print, enamel, and collage, courtesy of the artist.