

# CORCORAN

GALLERY OF ART • COLLEGE of ART + DESIGN

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CORCORAN PRESENTS *MANIFEST: ARMED* August 8-September 2, 2012 Gallery 31



WASHINGTON, D.C.—This summer, the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Corcoran College of Art + Design** will present *Manifest: Armed*, the first in a series of exhibitions in which the Corcoran will invite artists to reflect on trends in technology. Envisioned as a forum that encourages thoughtful discussion, the *Manifest* series will be installed in Gallery31, the Corcoran’s free exhibition space. An opening reception for *Manifest: Armed* will be held on Thursday, August 9, from 6 to 8 p.m. and will be free and open to the public. For more information, visit <http://www.corcoran.org/exhibitions/manifest-armed>.

*Manifest: Armed* will feature work by four artists—Sarah Frost, Julian Oliver, and Colin Beatty and Craig Smith of the collective SmithBeatty—who have considered aspects of modern weapons technology: how weapons are designed in the Internet era, how they are circulated and how they interface with information systems.

“The *Manifest* series is meant to contribute toward a discussion of the impact of technology on our lives and institutions,” states Fred Bollerer, Director and President of the Corcoran. “The name suggests that by manifesting ideas through objects or exhibitions, artists and curators are themselves engaged in a technological process. As we know, these processes are multifaceted and sometimes have repercussions beyond what we could expect. With that in mind, we must acknowledge with profound sorrow the coincidence of this first *Manifest* exhibition with the recent catastrophe in Aurora, Colorado. The Corcoran will donate a percentage of the museum’s admission proceeds for the month of August to the [Community First Foundation’s Aurora Victim Relief Fund](#).”

“The works in *Armed* were brought together to engender a constructive, thoughtful, and critical discussion about ubiquitous, hidden and often manipulative societal structures composed-of or facilitated-by technology. One of the topics

we touch on in this show is American gun culture. In light of the national attention now focused on this topic, we hope that *Armed* will provide an opportunity for the community to gather, discuss, and reflect."

Joseph Hale, Director of College Exhibitions, said, "The works in this show are at once allegorical and frighteningly literal. Frost's *Arsenal* confronts us with a little-known but astonishingly large subculture of teenagers, who employ the technology of YouTube to post designs for non-functional yet intricately realistic firearms. Julian Oliver's *Transparency Grenade*, an imaginary artifact of the era of international terrorism and electronic surveillance, uses micro-computer and wireless technology to generate a potential explosion, not of shrapnel but of data. In SmithBeatty's *FireSale©TM*, the definition of performance is stretched to include pre-existing systems of law and commerce, which the artists use to recruit a network of widely dispersed people who must decide whether to co-operate in assembling a real, working handgun."

Artist Sarah Frost focused her attention on a community of boys who self-publish instructional YouTube videos for making paper guns. For *Armed*, Frost has amassed a comprehensive arsenal – from handguns to elaborate Halo-inspired assault rifles – to create a monumental installation. They hang from the ceiling and are stacked in piles throughout the exhibit. Frost's fascination began with an attraction to the ingenuity of the homemade videos and guns and a simultaneous shock at the knowledge these boys possessed about the inner workings of guns. These guns are simple, consisting of tape and paper, but their sophistication is evident with their many moving parts: spinning chambers, folding or extendable stocks, pump-action barrels. The installation evokes questions – of meaning, politics, fragility, and the need to communicate – but above all is a distillation of form, construction and the placement of objects within a space.



Julian Oliver's *Transparency Grenade* seeks to capture the tension between corporate and governmental transparency – or lack thereof – and the trust we place in network infrastructure. Equipped with a tiny computer, microphone and powerless wireless antenna, *Transparency Grenade* captures network traffic and audio at the site and securely and autonomously streams it to a dedicated server where it is mined for information. Email fragments, HTML pages, images and voice extraction from this data are then presented on an online, public map, shown at the location of the detonation.

*FireSale©TM* is a collaborative artwork and incorporation involving the purchase, disassembly, distribution and reassembly of a 9mm caliber firearm. The firearm is disassembled into 33 individual parts, with each placed into a unique case for safe transportation. Each case was tagged and mailed to one of 33 stakeholders, including museum directors, art curators, artists, university professors, lawyers and a weapons manufacturer president. Each stakeholder decided whether or not to mail back the piece to be part of the gun's reassembly. "An individual participant can act as a disruptive agent," says artist Colin Beatty about the choice each stakeholder is charged with. "[They] can simply opt out, and say, 'I got the

trigger, I'm not going to send that trigger back in, therefore the gun will not operate,' or they can work for the greater net effect, not net benefit." *FireSale*™ will take place August 30<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Sarah Frost** was born in 1967 in Detroit and lives and works in St. Louis. She received a Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture and painting from the Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting from Washington University in St. Louis. Frost has exhibited her work regionally, including at Laumeier Sculpture Park and Museum, St. Louis; Regional Arts Commission, St. Louis; and Cedarhurst Center for the Arts, Mt. Vernon, IL and nationally in New York, Miami and Palm Springs, California. She has also received numerous awards and grants, including the inaugural Riverfront Times Visual Arts Mastermind Award, St. Louis in 2008 and grants from Arts in Transit, St. Louis and the Missouri Arts Council. Most recently she won the Great Rivers Biennial 2010, a grant funded by the Gateway Foundation and solo exhibition at Contemporary Art Museum Saint Louis. She is known best from her large-installation walls of keyboard keys titled *QWERTY*.

**Julian Oliver** is a Critical Engineer based in Berlin. His projects have been presented at museums, international electronic-art events and conferences, including the Tate Modern, Transmediale, Ars Electronica, FILE and the Japan Media Arts Festival. His work has received several awards, most notably the Golden Nica at Ars Electronica for "Newstweek", a collaborative project with studio partner Danja Vasiliev (an innocuous wall plug used to manipulate news read by other people on wireless hotspots). Julian has given numerous workshops and master classes in software art, augmented reality, creative hacking, data forensics, computer networking, object-oriented programming for artists, virtual architecture, artistic game-development, information visualization, UNIX/Linux, and open source development practices worldwide. He is a long-time advocate of the use of free software in artistic production, distribution and education.

**Dr. Craig Smith** is an American media artist and cultural theorist whose practice and research focuses on the process, aesthetics, and ethics of human-to-human interactivity in contemporary art. Smith's work includes photography, performance art, video, original writing, and lectures. He has been featured at PS1 MOMA Contemporary Art Institute, Tate Modern, George Eastman House, Hudson River museum, Galerie Schuster Photo (Berlin), SCM Hong Kong, ARTSPACE Sydney, Kent Gallery and White Columns (New York). Smith has published two books, *On the Subject of the Photographic* (2008) and *Training Manual for Relational Art* (2009). He has a forthcoming manuscript, *Relational Art: A guide Tour* (I. B. Tauris Ltd.). In 2011, Smith released a full-length album entitled *The Parasite: A sound and Text Composition* (Lunacy Records). Smith's art practice and academic research has been supported through foundation awards, grants, fellowships and residencies. His work is also supported through close collaborations with artists, including the performance group C (Lilah Freedland and Matthew Bokkam) and SmithBeatty (Colin Beatty). He has held several faculty positions, including at New York University, Goldsmiths College (University of London). He is currently associate professor of creative photography at University of Florida's College of Fine Arts.

**Colin Beatty** is an artist and healthcare consultant currently in the US Healthcare Provider Practice for PricewaterhouseCoopers in Boston. Colin obtained his M.B.A. from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. He also holds a MFA from Stanford University, an EMT certification from UCLA, and participated in the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York. He has been an exhibiting artist of a range of media including

painting, sculpture, installation, ongoing participation in works organized by Craig Smith, and more recently, performance work in such venues as banking institutions, government healthcare agencies, and national regulatory groups.

## **OPENING RECEPTION**

An opening reception will be held in Gallery 31 on Thursday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, from 6-8 pm. It is free and open to the public.

## **EXHIBITION-RELATED PERFORMANCE & PANEL DISCUSSION**

On Thursday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m., collaborative artists SmithBeatty (Colin Beatty and Craig Smith) will perform *FireSale* ©TM, in which a gun is reassembled from original pieces and 3D-printed replica parts. At 7:30 p.m., Smith, Beatty, and Frost will discuss common themes among their work in a panel discussion. The performance and panel are free and open to the public. For more information, visit <http://getinvolved.corcoran.org/firesale>.

## **VISITOR INFORMATION**

Gallery 31 is the dedicated exhibition space for the Corcoran College of Art + Design. The space hosts exhibitions by the Corcoran's students, alumni, faculty, and visiting artists. Located at the New York Avenue entrance of the Corcoran, Gallery 31 is open during museum hours and is free to the public. Museum hours are as follows: Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursdays 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Adult admission to the museum costs \$10, \$8 for Seniors (62+) and students (with valid ID). Corcoran Members, Children under 12, and active duty military are granted free admission year-round. Active duty military and up to five family members are granted free admission Memorial Day, May 28, through Labor Day, September 3, 2012 as a part of the [Blue Star Museums](#) program.

## **ABOUT THE CORCORAN**

**The Corcoran Gallery of Art**, a privately funded institution, was founded in 1869. It was America's first dedicated art museum and today is Washington's largest nonfederal museum of art. It is known internationally for its distinguished collection of historical and modern American art as well as contemporary art, photography, European painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts. In addition, a dynamic schedule of special exhibitions is complemented and enhanced by a range of educational programming, which together seek to enrich perspectives, support the local arts community, and encourage interpretation. **The Corcoran College of Art + Design** was founded in 1890 and stands as Washington's only four-year college of art and design, offering BFA degrees in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Fine Art Photography, Graphic Design, Interior Design, and Photojournalism; a BA in Art Studies; a five-year Bachelor of Fine Arts/Master of Arts in Teaching (BFA/MAT); an AFA in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design, and Photography; and MA degrees in Art and the Book, Art Education, Exhibition Design, Interior Design, Master of Arts in Teaching, and New Media Photojournalism. The College's Continuing Education program offers part-time credit and non-credit classes for children and adults and draws more than 2,500 participants each year. For more information about the **Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design**, visit [www.corcoran.org](http://www.corcoran.org).



Images: Installation image of Sarah Frost's "Arsenal" at P.P.O.W New York, NY

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