



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Abby Frohne, Director of Marketing
afrohne@cocastl.org, 314.561.4876

COCA ANNOUNCES 2023-2024 MILLSTONE GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

Gallery Season Includes Collective and Solo Exhibitions by St. Louis-Based Artists

ST. LOUIS (August 29, 2023)—[COCA's Millstone Gallery](#) will present three gallery exhibitions highlighting St. Louis-based artists during its 2023-2024 season: *Animated* by Rockette Fox, Sam Gaitsch, Jodi Kolpakov, and Amy Travis; *Eternal Jungle* by Jasmine Raskas; and an exhibition by Douglas Dale.

"With this season, we want to make space for forms of creativity historically excluded from museums and galleries. We noticed that there is usually a commentary on marginalized identities and values behind artistic media like comics or yarn weaving, and we want to amplify that fight for recognition and acceptance," said Karla Aguilar, COCA Curator in Residence. "As it has been a signature of the Millstone Gallery, the exhibitions will include interactive components and educational programming such as guided tours to artist roundtables."

Animated

September 8-October 8, 2023

Animated is a collective exhibition of four women artists—Rockette Fox, Sam Gaitsch, Jodi Kolpakov, and Amy Travis—who worked through the different modalities of illustration, from traditional American comics to lithographs and cartoon activism. Thick black lines create different sections on a white paper. The sun shining on a desert landscape, characters driving to their jobs, or a dialogue between lovers are immortalized inside comic panels. Historically, illustration specialists have always negotiated with the limits of space: what fits into a speech bubble? What aspects of reality deserve to be protected in a strip? The artists redefine the insistence in framing. Their stories reclaim values and identities that not only escape frames but sometimes don't need them at all. *Animated* is a celebration of drawings outside stereotypes and the diversity of the St. Louis illustration scene.

Eternal Jungle

October 27-December 10, 2023

Eternal Jungle, a solo exhibition by Jasmine Raskas, is an immersive installation including sculpture, painting, light, sound, and touch. The goal of this installation is to explore sentience and question relationships to non-animal forms of life (both real and imagined). In seeking to understand the point at which objects and systems are labeled as intelligent, conscious, or alive, visitors can together explore their ability to feel empathy and connectedness toward their environment. This exhibit investigates feelings of awe, wonder, and ethereal delight. Strange yet familiar, it will be an embrace of play and an experience of otherworldly desires.

Douglas Dale Exhibition

January 26-April 7, 2024

How does our identity differ from our exterior presentation? How does our history of gendered materials apply to a transgender landscape? Douglas Dale's practice investigates these questions, revolving around the creation of *Second Skins*: encasing furniture in polyethylene membranes or contouring yarn to trace the grain on found wood. They draw inspiration from camp, drag, and the club scene: spaces where a reality is the product of transgression through illusion. Proudly non-binary, they extend queering unto inanimate objects: mixing masculine and feminine materials, hard and soft, textile and sculpture.

The Millstone Gallery is free and open to the public during COCA's building hours. Since 2008, the Millstone Gallery has brought the community together to share and experience contemporary art, make personal connections to the work, and gain a greater understanding of the artistic process. Throughout the season, COCA offers additional programming related to the work on display, such as gallery talks, hands-on workshops and classes, lectures, and demonstrations.

The Millstone Gallery is made possible by The Arthur and Helen Baer Charitable Foundation, Bernoudy Foundation, The Millstone Foundation, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

###

ABOUT COCA

COCA's mission is to *enrich lives and build community through the arts*. With a commitment to equity and access, COCA serves as a regional hub for learning in and through the arts for all ages from all backgrounds. One of the most diverse cultural institutions in St. Louis, COCA serves more than 50,000 students, audience members, artists, and families from more than 200 zip codes across the St. Louis region every year. The fourth largest multi-disciplinary arts organization in the country, COCA is committed to supporting the vitality and creativity of more than 200 artists at the heart of their work in schools, community centers, local business, cultural organizations, and onsite at its campus in University City.