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Garrison Art Center presents:
HELLO, NEIGHBOR - A look into the world of others & into other worlds
A COLLABORATIVE IMMERSIVE ART EXPERIENCE

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GARRISON, NY. For the month of June 2019, expect to see Garrison Art Center like you've never seen it before! Invited artists, as well as selected winners of a juried open call, all initiated by the Art Center will transform the two galleries into an immersive & interactive art experience for visitors of ages five and up. The ticketed show will run weekends June 1-23. Tickets are $20 Adults, $5 age 5-17. www.garrisonartcenter.org Get sneak peeks on Instagram at #HelloNeighborGAC

Visitors will look into and journey through various environments, peeking into the worlds of other humans and creatures. Artwork by over thirty artists including video, sculpture, painting, textiles, light projections, dioramas, and gadgetry will fill proposed environments as diverse as a cabinet of curiosity, a maximalist's boudoir, a kitchen transformed, elements of nature made from unexpected materials, a black light environment, and more.

Art will be exhibited in these environments in a non-traditional setting, offering visitors a unique way to experience the work. Proceeds from the project support Garrison Art Center's exhibition series.

The Art Center's Executive Director, Katie Schmidt Feder, explains that the idea to create an immersive art space is inspired by such spaces as *Meow Wolf*, a 30,000 immersive art space in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which is now expanding to other cities: "Although we have far less square footage that *Meow Wolf*, we are using many of the same fundamental concepts their collective instills: collaborative creation by artists, designers, and craftspersons, whose work might not be the type to be exhibited in a traditional gallery setting; utilizing recycled and repurposed materials; exploring not just the visual, but audio and sensory." The ten lead artists that have come together for this project have been meeting monthly to share ideas, materials, techniques, and food! Although the collective was gathered by Schmidt Feder, she notes that "their diverse experiences and mediums are meshing together in a most wonderful and surprisingly organic way." The lead artists have also brought in contributing artists to assist with some of the spaces, expanding the collaborative nature of the entire exhibition.

The overall theme of the "experience" and the inspiration behind the title *Hello, Neighbor,* came first from a plentiful item ready for repurposing: WINDOWS! Windows let us look out on the world, but also allow us to look into the worlds of others, whether the innocent nighttime glance as we drive by a neighbor's house, or the more focused voyeuristic observations that lead to narratives or suspicions about our neighbors. Jimmie Stewart's character in Hitchcock's famous film, *Rear Window* couldn't help looking out on his neighbors' activities and lives, but soon was drawn into a real or imagined hypothesis about one particular neighbor. Scout and Jem Finch *(To Kill a Mockingbird)* had fears and assumptions about one of their neighbors, which eventually were proven false. What stories and assumptions will arise for visitors of this immersive exhibition? An opportunity for visitors to share such stories will be offered toward the end of the exhibition run, to be announced.

Artists, each serving as lead or co-lead of at least one environment, will also collaborate and help each other out during the ten day installation. Much has been created in advance, but some creation and problem-solving will happen on site once the artists are in the space.

Sharing the helm of the project with Schmidt Feder are **Gene Panczenko** and Candace Winter, as Technical Director and Associate Project Manager respectively.

Gene, a Peekskill-based artist who works drawing, sculpture, found object assemblage, video, photography, and music. He has exhibited in galleries and museums in the Hudson Valley and points beyond. Gene is a frequent collaborator with video artist Marcy B. Freedman under the moniker GeneFree and one such video collaboration has been created for this show. Gene has also designed one surprise environment and his original ambient music will fill another. Gene works for KVL Audio Visual and is creating the lighting and sound design for the exhibition.

Candace Winter first came onboard the Collaborative Immersive Art Experience project as an artist but was soon asked to step in as Associate Project Manager (following the departure of Samatha Palmeri who helped with early brainstorming), serving as liaison to lead artists, sponsors and other administrative tasks. Candace was born into a family of artists and has been creating art since she could hold a crayon. Her work has always been about bold color, texture and telling a visual story. She studied Graphic Design with a focus on Children's Illustration and Art Education at SUNY New Paltz where she earned her BFA. For many years she worked as a faux finish artist, painter and muralist, and as a teaching artist visiting schools throughout Westchester County. Candace and Katie co-lead an environment called THE WOODS for which she has created objects that evoke the natural world using both natural and unexpected materials. The pieces she has created for the environment draw on the common theme in literature, especially children's fairy tales and picture books in which "the 'woods' and all its creatures can bring a feeling of beauty and wonder or creepy bizarre discomfort". Candace also helped lead the two community textile workshops which were also facilitated by lead artist Kat Stoutenborough. Elements created in these workshops will be incorporated into what will be the centerpiece of the exhibition created by Winter, Stoutenborough and Schmidt Feder.

Kat Stoutenborough is a self-taught fiber artist. She has a background in the performing arts and a masters degree in public administration. She lives and works in Beacon, NY with her family and is the artist-in-residence at the First Presbyterian Church of Beacon. For this installation, Kat is also creating THE RIVER, an environment which will be created with her signature use of repurposed objects, textiles, light and whimsy.

Additional lead artists include **Ryan Biracree** and **Steve Gerberich**, who both share pre-existing collections of their works, integrated and displayed in a whole new way.

Ryan will share his CABINET OF CURIOSITIES, first developed as part of his thesis for an MFA in poetry from Sarah Lawrence College (BA in poetry and computer music from Bennington College). Currently the Digital Services Coordinator at the Desmond-Fish Library, where he runs the Innovation & Learning Center, a creative makerlab that integrates technology and the arts, Ryan is also a taxidermist and proprietor of Black Bears on Bath Salts, an online antiques and oddities shop specializing in preserved exotic biological specimens. His poems and essays have appeared in various publications, and his taxidermy has been featured on *Oddities, Sleepy Hollow*, and *American Horror Story*. He lives in Beacon, NY with his wife and two daughters.

Steve Gerberich builds some of the most entertaining contraptions you've ever seen. An alchemist of odds and ends, he's always searching for possibilities: a plastic dinosaur for this, a lampshade for that. He spins them all together in an elaborate call and response; call it a dialogue between mechanical memories and active imagination. Gerberich turns discarded labor-saving devices into a wealth of fantastical sculptures. His famed Newburgh, New York studio - laboratory of thingamabobs whose compatibility is always being tested - holds a vast and odd collection of recycled resources. From moose heads to hand beaters he finds magical uses for all. And his processes aren't secret. He leaves an open invitation for friends to join him in his experiments.

Kit Burke-Smith, Education Coordinator at Garrison Art Center, has brainstormed a very unique environment - elements of which are created with knitted yarn. In addition to leading the Yarn Salon at GAC, Kit is a jeweler, living and maintaining a studio in Beacon, NY. She has exhibited in many shows and galleries both local and internationally including Galerie Marzee, Theo Ganz Studio, Gallery 66, American Craft Show, CraftBoston and Garrison Art Center's Riverside craft fair. Kit holds a BFA in jewelry and metalsmithing from Rhode Island school of design and an MFA in metals from SUNY New Paltz.

Carla Rae Johnson, another Peekskill based artist, is creating and environment called BRIDGE which will feature one of her meticulously crafted wood sculptures. A 2017 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow in Drawing, a 2005 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow in Sculpture and a 1990 recipient of a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, Carla's work has been exhibited in solo, invitational, and curated shows in museums and galleries nationally as well as in New York City and is included in numerous public and private collections. A retired Professor of Art, Carla Rae Johnson taught at both Westchester Community - Valhalla, and Marymount College. BS in Art from Ball State University and MFA from the University of Iowa. Carla finds the most challenging forms and concepts at the intersection of the visual and the verbal and delights in communicating insights with humor, word-play, and not just a little irony. She also enjoys working collaboratively with artist/peers.

Jana Platina Phipps and **Sarah Petchell** co-lead an installation called BOUDOIR**.** Jana works under the moniker the Trim Queen, is an award-winning trimmings expert known for her refined vision in the use of embellishment in home decor, fashion, and art. She believes "Embellishment is a creative form of self-expression." Her latest project is planning a Trim Queen Maker Tour working with Venetian artisans in Italy for November 2019. She is an avid tennis player and lives with her family in Yorktown. Jana's studio in Peekskill, NY where Sarah Petchell serves as Project Manager, planning for trimmings and textile installations for trade shows in addition to the day-to-day running of a design studio. She was born in Sydney, Australia, moving to New York in 1993, and currently lives in a beautiful stone cottage with her family and two cats in Mohegan Lake. Fiber arts are in her genes - with a long family history of knitting, dressmaking, quilting and embroidering - she continues the traditions with multiple works-in-progress always at hand. Peekskill musician Jedidiah Kaine will provide audio for the space and Erin Brophy of Fabric Mart in Yorktown is assisting with embroidered text for the space.

Joan (Hannigan) Vogt is the lead on TREVI KITCHEN. Growing up, she wanted to be like Laurie Anderson. In her 20's and 30's, she waited tables and took art and history classes, eventually earning an MFA in sculpture from CUNY. Joanie also works as a scenic artist for a grassroots theater company. Joanie's process usually starts with items she finds in thrift shops and sometimes on the side of the road (assemblage). These days, Joanie has been making art with political and social commentary. Her installation lets us look in on a very private moment of longing and make a wish of our own.

A recent add to the group of artists is **Kim Walhauer** who, will not only help install the 20+ dioramas that join the exhibition via a juried artist call, but will also help build out and stage a mysterious black light environment dreamed up Schmidt Feder that holds a hidden story that just might explain all the other spaces.

The final environment could house a "Neighbor" of the future, or perhaps it is how we envisioned the future 50 years in the past! You will have to decide. The space will incorporate the spirit many of us had as a kid to create an environment out of things we might find in our house (the couch fort, the garage haunted house, the blanket tee-pee). The space will also touch on the abundancy of plastics and other non-biodegradables. Dare we ponder a future where our environments are forced to be created completely out of the plastics we cannot seem to curtail?

This final space will also feature an ART AUTOMAT where small works and goods created by participating artists for immediate sale. This will include CDs but the electronic music artist Audra Kizina known as KIDAUDRA, who will be performing at the June 1, 9 pm opening of the exhibition. Originally from Cleveland and now residing in New York, Audra's sound is semi-ambient, beat-driven music combining elements of house, industrial, noise, and pop. Audra's music and embroidery art will be also featured in parts of the exhibition. Other contributing artist to the exhibition currently include Melissa Schlobohom, Doreen O'Connor, Amy Barry, and Coulter Young III (more to come). Sponsors include: Garrie Pest Control, iSmile Othodontics (formerly Schechtman Orthodontics), Dain's Lumber, LeChase Constructions Services, Danny's Cycles, Yogibo Bean Bags, ArtWare for Good, & Fabric Mart.

Opening Parties June 1: 3 pm – *I SPY for Families*, 5 pm *Curiosity & Cocktails*, 9 pm *Night Peepers* with live performance: Kidaudra. Tickets are required to attend parties. Garrisonartcenter.org.

For more information, interview, or high resolution images, contact Katie Schmidt Feder, director@garrisonartcenter.org 845-424-3960.