

# t r a n s f o r m e r

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## E11: CODA

July 23 – August 10, 2014

Artisphere

1101 Wilson Boulevard

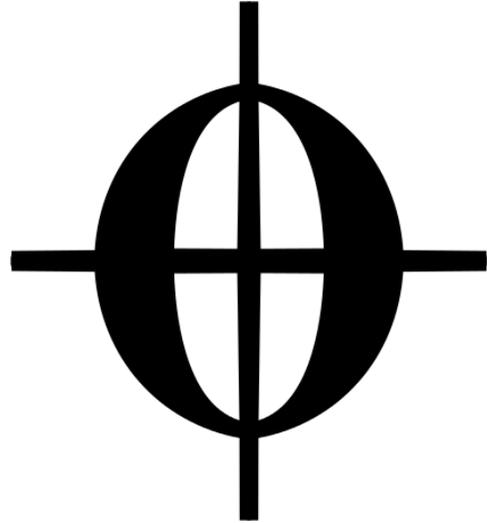
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Terrace Gallery

### Opening Reception:

Thursday, July 24, 7 – 9pm; Artist Remarks at 7:30

*E11: CODA* marks the 11<sup>th</sup> season of Transformer's *Exercises For Emerging Artists* program. Launched in March 2004 to support a select group of artists beyond the art school experience but still emerging in their artistic careers, this peer critique and mentorship program is intended as a 'jump-start' for DC area artists seeking to connect with peer artists & mentors in an intensive critique process as they create a new work or new body of work. Artists invited to participate in the *Exercises* are nominated by Transformer staff, Advisory Council, as well as area arts educators and curators.



Different artistic disciplines each year, *E11: CODA* focuses on artists working within sound art. This year's selected *Exercises* artists include: **Alex Braden**, **Emily Francisco**, **E. Jane**, and **Ian McDermott**. Beginning in March 2014 and spanning through the end of June, these artists met bi-weekly with Lead Mentor **Ryan Holladay**, Artisphere's New Media Curator, Transformer's Exhibitions & Gallery Coordinator **Julia Young**, and invited guest mentors, to receive insightful feedback on their creative processes and concepts of sound art through various methods and mediums. *E11* guest mentors include **Alberto Gaitán**, **John Henry Blatter**, and **Christine Sun Kim**. The culminating *Exercises* group exhibition is *Coda* presented at Artisphere as the final movement of *Fermata*, a sound art exhibition co-curated by Holladay.

*E11: Coda* is a special collaboration between Transformer and Artisphere, and marks the first off-site exhibition resulting from Transformer's annual *Exercises for Emerging Artists* series. *E11: Coda* asks the participating artists to challenge their understanding of sound and their previous relationships to it. Via Transformer's *Exercises* mentorship process, the artists approach this project in a conceptually unique manner, utilizing their bi-weekly meetings with Holladay, Young, and guest mentor visits, as well as studio visits to inspire and generate both technical and conceptual progression throughout the course of the program towards the creation of new work.

"In musical notation, a fermata is an articulation mark placed above a note or a rest on a staff. It indicates that the note should be sustained beyond what its note value would otherwise indicate," explains Holladay. In *Fermata*, visitors are encouraged to broaden their familiarity with sound art, challenging listeners and participants alike to be receptive of a variety of sound practices. This broad approach to the medium invites visitors to disregard their preconceived notions of sound and merely focus on all that they aurally experience when confronting the speaker installation. *Coda* is also a musical articulation that signifies the concluding passage of a movement, forming an addition to the basic structure."

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“When Artisphere embarked on this idea of creating an exhibition of sound, we knew that we wanted to find a way to bring emerging artists into the space along side some of the more established names,” says Holladay. “Transformer’s *Exercises* program – an initiative now entering its second decade, with an established track record for successfully working with up-and-coming artists, connecting them with advisors and mentors as they create new work, makes for a perfect collaboration. Every participating artist in *E11* is coming from a different place with different skill sets and backgrounds. The works that they are creating for *Coda* are a demonstration of the diversity of ways sound can be integrated into an artist’s work.”

The focal point of both *Fermata* and *Coda* is situated around a wall of speakers designed by Richmond-based artist and *E11* guest mentor **John Henry Blatter**. Aesthetically, the speakers function as a visual representation of sound as the centerpiece of the show, boasting 44 functioning speakers that allow up to 12 channels of audio throughout the matrix. *E11* artists utilize the 12 channels of audio to fit their individual pieces, which they have been developing with Ryan and guest mentors since the program began in early March.

## *E11*: CODA ARTIST BIOS:

**Alex Braden** is a sound artist, musician, and composer from Arlington, VA. His compositions typically incorporate a healthy blend of musical elements, ambient field recordings, and heavily manipulated found sound. Alex’s installations use myriad sound sources to create sonic environments in an attempt to either isolate the individual or to unite an audience. Since graduating with a BFA in Sound Art from George Mason University in 2012 he has performed across the country with Bella Russia, as well as installing locally at (e)merge Art Fair, EMP Collective, and Artisphere. Alex’s work for *Coda*, *househusband*, was composed and recorded over a period of four weeks within the residence of his in-laws using only household objects. This particular experiment in restriction is meant as a document and critique of the western domestic landscape. A set of wind chimes, a toy ukelele, a full bathtub, a basement drum kit, and an antique family heirloom piano are the main sources of sound.

**Emily Francisco** is a sculptress specializing in the creation of interactive objects that generate sound. Born in Honolulu, raised in an isolated mid-western town, educated in Saint Louis and the District of Columbia – she is a former Artist in Residence at Artisphere, and will be in residence at Montgomery College beginning January 2015. In September, Francisco will have a solo exhibition, *Something Slightly Familiar*, at Flashpoint Gallery and will give a lecture at the Smithsonian Museum of American Art as part of the Luce Foundation Center’s Art + Coffee Series. Francisco’s work for *Coda* is a beautiful mess in three parts. Falling in and out of rhythm and harmony, she combines pleasant melodies with painfully distorted samples. These three pieces source a decade’s worth of rough recordings mixed with sounds collected and arranged specifically for John Henry Blatter’s speaker wall. Audio sources include a make-shift instrument crashing around in a minivan, radio dialog, a field recording from an ER observation area, manipulated music boxes, bell sets, a toy piano, the bellows of a early 19<sup>th</sup> century melodeon, a clock in a cooking pot, and water bursting from a wooden structure - among other things.

**E. Jane** is an intermedia conceptualist from Washington, DC, and currently a candidate for a Master of Fine Arts from the PennDesign Program at the University of Pennsylvania. She has shown photo, performance and sound works at Well Arts College in Paris, Bronx Art Space in New York and in a solo exhibition at Pleasant Plains Workshop in DC. Jane’s piece in *Coda* is a perceptual augmentation of familiar aural environments. This piece was composed from a series of field recordings collected around Washington, DC. The recordings were collected on routes the artist commonly traveled. The recordings were cut, sampled and processed to create *Internal Volume*, a three-movement composition.

**Ian McDermott** is an artist, comedian, and lifelong resident of the DC area. Over the past five years he has come to be regarded as one of DC’s finest alternative comedians, with work spanning from five minute stand-up sets to full-length musicals. His elaborate performances, which incorporate wearable sculpture, complex audio and heavy audience interaction, have been designated under their own genre, *comedy conceptual*, or *conceptual art*.

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After being featured in venues, galleries and festivals across the District, Baltimore, New York and Chicago, laymen and critics alike have called his work "breathless, bulging, irreverent, unfocusedly focused, energetic, terrifying, impossible to describe and, most of all, hilarious."

For *E11 Coda*, McDermott presents the second work in his *Hypercomedy* series. This series serves to overload the senses, the most important one being humor, and often won't be fully comprehended until after multiple experiences of each artwork. *The American Dream, In 2-D Surround Sound* is a musical semi-narrative inspired by a passage that the artist found written in braille on the outside of a Styrofoam coffee cup. The cup had been discarded, for reasons good or bad, in the trash outside of a marketing agency in Northwest DC.

*E11* Lead Mentor **Ryan Holladay** is the new media curator at Artisphere where he has worked since it opened in 2010. He is one of three curators of *Fermata*, Artisphere's spring/summer 2014 exhibition and its first dedicated entirely to sound. Additionally, Ryan works as an artist along with his brother and collaborator, Hays Holladay. Together, the two have amassed a body of work that includes sound installations, film scores, mobile apps and interactive concerts and events. They have worked with a range of companies and institutions such as MTV, Olin and the MIT Media Lab. Ryan is a 2013 TED Fellow and recently served as artist-in-residence at Stanford University's Experimental Media Art Department.

***E11: CODA* EXHIBITION HOURS at ARTISPHERE:** Wednesday – Friday, 4 – 11pm; Saturday: Noon – 11pm; and Sunday: Noon – 5pm.

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**t r a n s f o r m e r** is a Washington, DC based 501 (c) 3 artist-centered non-profit visual arts organization, providing a consistent, supportive, and professional platform for emerging artists to explore and present experimental artistic concepts, build audiences for their work, and advance their careers. A catalyst and advocate for contemporary artists and emergent expression in the visual arts, Transformer connects and promotes emerging visual artists within regional, national and international contexts through exhibition and programs partnerships with artists, curators, commercial galleries, museums and other cultural institutions.

**t r a n s f o r m e r's** 2014/15 Exhibition Series and programs are supported by: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/ NEA, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Bernstein Family Foundation, The CrossCurrents Foundation, The Robert Lehman Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts' Access to Artistic Excellence Award, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer – individual donors, members of our Annual Auction Host Committee, and Corporate Sponsors.

**Artisphere** connects artists and audiences through an eclectic mix of fresh, thought-provoking arts programming, providing insight into the creative process and to engage in artistic adventures — from contemporary visual art, live music and theatre to new media, film and dance. Artisphere's mission is to connect people to the fun and wonder found in creativity, celebrate diverse human expression, and advance art that explores the ideas and issues of our time.

