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Galleries

The Multifarious 'Seven'

By Jessica Dawson

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Thursday, July 21, 2005; Page C05

More than 60 artists exhibit in "seven separate shows." So reads the press release for "Seven," a show of work culled from the Washington Project for the Arts/Corcoran membership roster. Me, I saw one sprawling bulk of a show, one that wasn't particularly coherent or tied to a theme other than WPA/C membership.



This still depicting a housewife's plight is from Kathryn Cornelius's witty video "Resolve." (Washington Project For The Arts/Corcoran)

The survey includes some of the area's most successful art makers -- Maxwell MacKenzie, Sam Gilliam and Chan Chao among them. But this crowded hang pulls in way too much material as it struggles for significance. Other than a few standouts -- Kathryn Cornelius's wry video depicting desperate housewifery, in which she vacuums sand off the beach, is an excellent example -- the show is just sort of there.

"Seven: Seven Separate Shows Under One Roof" at Warehouse Gallery, 1021 Seventh St. NW, Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sunday noon-6 p.m., 202-639-1828, to Sept. 9.

The Early Stones, Strutting Their Stuff



Mick Jagger and Ron Wood in New York in 1977, one of Ken Regan's photos at Govinda. (Govinda Gallery)

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Metrosexuals got nothin' on these guys. The Rolling Stones, circa 1975, were the girliest guys around. Ken Regan's photos at Govinda capture the rockers in their glammest days, back when they bought eyeliner in bulk. They're caught preening onstage, in the studio, backstage, in the john, and hobnobbing with Andy Warhol. Stare long enough and Mick's pout starts to look like Angelina Jolie's. A good prep for those attending the dinosaur rockers' 2005 tour, which gets underway in Boston's Fenway Park next month and hits the District in October.

Ken Regan at Govinda Gallery, 1227 34th St. NW, Tuesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-6 p.m., 202-333-1180, to Aug. 13.

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Street Culture Bursts Into the Gallery



"Mandala of the B-Bodhisattva #3" offers a worldview.(Provisions Library)

A sampler chronicling street culture's invasion of the galleries, "Change Methods" includes important artists you should know. The 1980s-era work on paper by Keith Haring reminds us that early adopters brought street culture into the galleries decades ago. The rest of the show promotes a mostly youthful crew, represented by pieces shown recently in D.C.-area shows -- among them, Kehinde Wiley's urban rococo painting and Iona Rozeal Brown's ladies in Louis Vuitton print burqas. New to me: two artists who bring break-dancing floors into the gallery, transforming urban paraphernalia into aesthetic objects. Sanford Biggers's version, "Mandala of the B-Bodhisattva, #3," skillfully links globalism to street culture.

"Change Methods: Hip-Hop, Social Change and Global Influences," at Provisions Library, 1611 Connecticut Ave. NW, Wednesday-Friday noon-7 p.m., Saturday-Sunday noon-5 p.m., 202-299-0460, to Aug. 14.

What's Past Is Prolonged at McLean



Phyllis Plattner's "Legends #37/Mary Magdalene," part of "Strictly Painting" series, part of "Strictly Painting 5."(McLean Project For The Arts)

The fifth installment of McLean's biennial juried exhibition, "Strictly Painting," collects works riffing on painting's precedents, from early Renaissance panel painting to rococo and abstract expressionism. Brian Balderston occupies the unique position of having produced both the very best and the very worst pieces on view. The bad one is conceptualism gone indulgent: We're asked to watch a guy paint a white rectangle on a white wall for 17 minutes. Balderston's success is installed in a corner, where he replicates a few square feet of suburban home with white gloss paint and carpet. Here he's testing just how far the definition of painting will stretch -- without testing our patience.

"Strictly Painting 5" at McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday 1-5 p.m., 703-790-1953, to July 30.

At Transformer, An Army of One



Djakarta's Vin Diesel "recruitment" poster.(Courtesy Of The Artist)

Transformer hosts a trio of young artists enrolled in the nonprofit's mentoring program, the Exercises for Emerging Artists. These works in progress are promising. Djakarta (she goes by the one name) comes out kicking. She offers postcards and a video, both of which riff on classic rap act N.W.A.'s song "Niggaz4Life." The postcards -- take one, they're free -- feature pictures of Tiger Woods, Vin Diesel and Mariah Carey with an Uncle Sam-inspired "We Want You" slogan and seem to ask: Do we create racial identity through packaging, or are we born with it? An infectious stream

of video and movie clips questions Hollywood's selling of black stereotypes.

*"E2: Carving a Path" at Transformer, 1404 P St. NW,
Wednesday-Saturday 1- 7 p.m., 202-483-1102, to Aug. 6.*

New Setting, Same Hodgepodge



Barbara French Pace's "Road to San Donato," featured in the Foundry Gallery exhibition "Celebrate!"(Foundry Gallery)

Venerable District-based co-operative Foundry Gallery decamped this month to a red brick townhouse east of Dupont Circle. The new space is more elegant, but the gallery's quality hasn't changed: This hodgepodge of photographs, paintings and works on paper by 21 gallery members amounts to a mediocre lot, making me wonder how co-ops like this

one fit into today's art world. Back in the 1970s, co-operatives circumvented a staid gallery system and attracted cutting-edge and communally minded creators. Today, a co-op's lack of quality control proves a major weakness. Foundry's opening show celebrates a community of artists who take pride in their work but inhabit the art world's perimeter.

*Members show at Foundry Gallery, 1314 18th St. NW,
Wednesday-Sunday noon-6 p.m., 202-463-0203, to July 31.*

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