



# Everyday Everyday Everyday Everyday Freedoms

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## Opening Reception

February 1, 2019, 5-8pm

## Meyerhoff Gallery

MICA, Fox Building  
1303 West Mount Royal Ave.  
Baltimore, MD 21217

## Gallery Hours

Monday–Saturday, 10am–5pm  
Sunday, 12–5pm

## Featured Artists

Devin Allen  
Aram Han Sifuentes  
Kirsten Leenaars  
Erick Medel  
Maria Paula Moreno  
Alessandra Plaza Saravia  
Bilphena Yahwon  
Sophia Gach-Rasool

**February 1 - March 17, 2019**



Erick Medel, *American's Only Pop-Up Gallery*, 2018, courtesy of the artist

The Maryland Institute College of Art and the For Freedoms 50 State Initiative present *Everyday, Everyday, Everyday, Everyday Freedoms*, an exhibition that reimagines civic engagement beyond voting in elections. This group exhibition considers how a democracy could be free from disenfranchisement; forming a critique of the frayed political climate from a multiplicity of perspectives. Featuring local, national, and international artists at all stages of their careers, their artwork frames participation and activism through photography, video, game design, sculpture, installation, data visualization, text, and textiles.

Citizenship, race, gender, age, and socioeconomic class exacerbate the inability of some to survive, let alone to engage civically. Beyond critiquing these systemic barriers, the curators prioritize art's ability to change perspectives through dialogue, collaboration, and social engagement. They imagine freedom as a release from partisan ideology and encourage the viewer to consider civic engagement as an ongoing daily practice—one that is malleable and ripe for redefinition.

*Everyday, Everyday, Everyday, Everyday Freedoms* is organized by the Curatorial Practice MFA Class of 2020—Andre Bradley, Rodrigo Carazas Portal, Hannah Davis, Ashley He, Imani Haynes, Sung-ah Kang, Eva Saily, Nathalie von Veh, Minwen Wang, Tiffany Ward, and Aden Weisel; under the direction of José Ruiz, Director of Curatorial Practice, and Gerald Ross, Director of Exhibitions.

For photographs and further information, please contact  
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## About the Artists

**Devin Allen** (b. 1989, Baltimore, MD) is a documentary photographer, born and raised in West Baltimore, who takes his city as his subject. He rose to national attention when one of his photographs of the Baltimore Uprising was published on the cover of *Time* in May 2015. While Allen's photography historicizes Baltimore, his educational programs are dedicated to empowering young people with cameras so they can tell their stories.

**Aram Han Sifuentes** (b. 1986, South Korea) is a fiber, social practice, and performance artist who works to claim spaces for immigrant and disenfranchised communities. She is based in Chicago, where the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum exhibited her 2016 project *The Official Unofficial Voting Station*, which welcomed everyone—particularly the disenfranchised—to vote at stations across the U.S. and Mexico. Her current series of work promotes knowledge of constitutional rights, regardless of immigration status, and creates protective spaces from authorities.

**Kirsten Leenaars** (b. 1976, Netherlands) is an experimental documentary maker who engages with individuals and communities to create participatory video and performance work. She is based in Chicago, but recently completed a three-year project in Milwaukee, culminating in a solo exhibition at the Haggerty Museum of Art. *(Re)Housing the American Dream* was a collaboration with refugee and native-born youth that oscillates between fiction and documentation, reinterprets personal stories, highlights shared humanity through humor and play, and reimagines everyday realities through staging, improvisation, and iteration.

**Erick Medel** (b.1992, Mexico) is an interdisciplinary artist who combines sculpture, photography, and ceramics with consumer objects to explore national iconography. In 2018, Medel completed his MFA at RISD and has been exhibiting his work in group shows across the U.S. and Canada. Through transformations in materials and form, he engages in a dialogue about the customization of identity and the power of consumer culture, habits, and symbolism of polarized ideologies in the U.S.

**María Paula Moreno** (b. 1992, Colombia) focuses her research on sociopolitical issues that materialize across the public and private spheres. Her work *Individual Flags* has been exhibited at ARTBO 2017 in Bogotá, Colombia and in her 2018 solo exhibition at Harborview and Pole in San Pedro, California. Created through participatory actions, these flags frame the intimate world of the individual using the same visual language as the official flags that represent nations.

**Alessandra Plaza Saravia** (b. 1984, Perú) integrates art and technology to create socially engaged installations and software as tools to access knowledge and to make space to discuss sociopolitical conflicts. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Berlin, Germany and has recently exhibited across South America. Her video game *Body Invaders*, the subject of her first solo exhibition, uses play to call attention to the restrictions—from government, religion, and media—that women face on their bodily autonomy.

**Bilphena Yahwon** (b. 1994, Liberia) is a Baltimore-based writer, researcher, organizer, and womanist. She is also ¼ of Press Press, an interdisciplinary publishing practice organized to shift and deepen the understanding of voices, identities, and narratives. Her work uses a womanist approach and centers women's health and well-being, transformative/restorative justice, and intersectionality.



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## **About MICA**

MICA (Maryland Institute College of Art) is home to top-ranked fine arts, design, electronic media, art education, liberal arts, and professional studies degree and non-credit programs. The College's alumni and programming reach around the globe, even as MICA remains a cultural cornerstone in the Baltimore/Washington region, hosting hundreds of exhibitions and events annually by students, faculty, and other established artists.

## **About Curatorial Practice**

MICA's MFA in Curatorial Practice prepares students to determine how curators will shape the cultural life of our global society. The first MFA of its kind in the country, this program offers a hands-on curriculum that balances collaboration and socially engaged practices with academic research in history and theory. Students work in a variety of experimental contexts and formats, proposing alternative models of exhibition-making, institution-building, and social justice through art. Designed to forge connections among artists, institutions, and communities, the program fosters contemporary art and culture in collaboration with diverse audiences, and links local issues to international discourse. By creating real-world collaborative and individual exhibitions, our students raise awareness, bridge societal gaps, and catalyze exchanges across various disciplines, both inside and outside the artworld.

## **About For Freedoms**

For Freedoms started in 2016 as a platform for civic engagement, discourse, and direct action for artists in the United States. Inspired by Norman Rockwell's 1943 paintings of the four universal freedoms articulated by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1941—freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear—For Freedoms seeks to use art to deepen public discussions of civic issues and core values, and to clarify that citizenship in American society is deepened by participation, not by ideology. For Freedoms is part of a rich history of artists employing means of mass communication to provoke political discourse. For Freedoms believes art, and artists, play an important role in galvanizing our society towards a more representative and transparent government.

## **About the 50 State Initiative**

Since 2016, For Freedoms has produced special exhibitions, town hall meetings, billboards, and lawn sign installations to spur greater participation in civic life. In 2018, For Freedoms launched its 50 State Initiative, a new phase of programming to encourage broad participation and inspire conversation around the recent midterm elections. Building off of the existing artistic infrastructure in the United States, For Freedoms has developed a network of over 300 artists and 200 institutional partners who will produce nationwide public art installations, exhibitions and local community dialogues in order to inject nuanced, artistic thinking into public discourse. Centered around the vital work of artists, For Freedoms hopes that these exhibitions and related projects will model how arts institutions can become civic forums for action and discussion of values, place, and patriotism.