

# StarTribune

## Bless this artful mess

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Take 10,000 Q-tips, some broken light bulbs, a zillion glittery plastic tabs, junked acrylic and insulation foam, some moss and twigs.

Make art.

That appears to be the assignment taken to heart by winners of the Jerome Foundation's 2011-12 fellowships. And it worked. The five delivered a fresh, engaging show with a lot of unexpected thematic connections, on view through Nov. 6 at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

When Jerome officials hand \$10,000 to each artist, there's no requirement that they work together or investigate a common line of thought. On the contrary, the grants are a no-strings-attached opportunity for young talent to go its own way and see what happens. That these five appear to have had a conversation is pure chance, but it makes for a more coherent and provocative exhibit than usual.

Chalk it up to the zeitgeist

That we live in a cluttered, trash-strewn world is not news. Nor is the notion that our understanding is constantly shaped by artifice – by our collective memories of paintings and photos, advertising imagery, scenes from television, film and myriad other media. The challenge is to do something novel with these givens.

**Gregory Euclide** rose to the occasion by using bits of junk in elaborate 3-D dioramas of visionary places. Fashioned from particleboard, Mylar, found-foam, plastic binding straps and other detritus, his constructions unfold from the walls like scenes from pop-up books. He wraps little watercolor vignettes of urban skylines and modernist homes into rocky landscapes sculpted from folded paper festooned with twig-trees, pine-cone cliffs and tiny waterfalls made from ribbons of thick paint. There's a seductive charm to his romantic trompe l'oeil concoctions that fancifully re-imagine Eden yet again on tiny, free-form stage sets.

**Richard Barlow** at first seems to be auditioning as a disco decorator. He has covered a rust-colored wall with thousands of shimmering black-and-gold plastic tabs that flutter like autumn leaves and would sparkle plenty under nightclub lights. Inspired by a 19th-century photo of trees, the pendulous forms in his evanescent mural also bring to mind Monet's famous paintings of his wisteria-covered Japanese bridge.

Nearby, Barlow has transformed imagery from automobile ads into elegantly minimal landscapes. Using rusty iron oxide as a pigment, he stained thick watercolor paper with ad-derived silhouettes that evoke the snow-crested mountains, forested shorelines and rocky inlets of the Northwest coast. Even if we've never zoomed through these iconic landscapes in an SUV, such imagery is so deeply embedded in our DNA that Barlow's poetic distillates tug at our minds with images of nature experienced, exploited, longing for and lost.



Richard Barlow's "Pixelated Bromide" installation is made with thousands of shimmering black-and-gold plastic tabs.

Richard Sennott, Star Tribune

### JEROME FELLOWSHIP EXHIBITION: 2011-12

**What:** Richard Barlow, Gregory Euclide, Lauren Herzak-Bauman, Alison Hiltner and Jehra Patrick repurpose the past in new environmentally themed paintings, sculptures and installations.

**When:** 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat., noon-5 p.m. Sun. Ends Nov. 6.

**Where:** Minneapolis College of Art and Design, 2501 Stevens Av. S., Mpls.

**Admission:** Free.

**Info:** 612-874-3700 or [mcad.edu](http://mcad.edu).

Installed in a darkened room, **Alison Hiltner's** strange sculpture and several wall pieces give a sci-fi twist to the known world. Suspended from a collapsed parachute, her sculpture, "Supply Drop Origins Unknown," is a large tube filled with 10,000 Q-tips clustered into weird mushroom-like configurations. The title hints that the thing comes from alien beings whose intentions are at best ambivalent. Her electrified wall pieces resemble randomly lit and constantly changing computer motherboards.

#### Repurposed fragments

A moody installation by **Lauren Herzak-Bauman** is the gallery's centerpiece. Seven long electrical cords dangle from the two-story ceiling, ending in what appear to be the shattered filaments of burnt-out light bulbs. On the floor beneath the cords, in a stain of charcoal, lie broken bulbs that the artist meticulously fabricated from porcelain. The title attached to this installation, "Today and All Other Days," suggests a grim present and bleak future that one hopes does not reflect the psychological condition of this obviously talented young woman.

The seven paintings of **Jehra Patrick** are keen to connect with earlier art. Her "View of Haarlem, 1665, Ruisdael," for example, is a pale, sepia-toned cloud that reads as pure abstraction and reminds us of the essential abstraction at the heart of all painting, even the most representational image. What is a painted cloud, after all, but a brushy illusion in tinted pigment? Likewise, her "Step Ladder" is an arrangement of fragmentary angles and shaded lines, while "Ceiling -- Grand Salon, Hôtel Gaillard de Bouëxière," is but a scatter of pastel curlicues. Other paintings depict light bouncing off a floor, a bit of fabric, the corner of a landscape obscuring part of a portrait. Composed from snippets of architecture, clothing and furniture, her paintings -- like the rest of this provocative show -- gather debris from the past, refresh its form and imbue it with new meaning.

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