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Announced: "Contemplation and Practice" @ Kenise Barnes Fine Art

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Gallery II: Contemplation and Practice – Meg Hitchcock, Jill Parisi, Eleanor White

Opening reception Saturday, March 10, 2018, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Exhibition on view in gallery II March 10 – April 14, 2018

Kenise Barnes Fine Art is pleased to present a three-person exhibition featuring artists who share a contemplative and obsessive art-making practice. Each of these artists builds their work through the accumulation of small components; inherently, the implication of time and devotion is an important concept in their art.

Meg Hitchcock's work begins with sacred texts; she cuts tiny individual letters from various scripture and uses the isolated typeset characters to create intricate designs. Letters are cut from a Bible and rearranged into a passage from the Koran, letters from the Koran are transformed into verses from the Torah, and so on. Her work addresses the limitations of language and interpretation and questions the exclusivity of fundamentalist belief systems. By deconstructing and recombining holy books of diverse religions, Hitchcock undermines their authority and animates the common thread that weaves through all scripture. A former evangelical Christian, Hitchcock is interested in the psychology of authority, surrender, and transcendence. The repetition of cutting and placing letters simulates the liturgical sacraments of the Church and alludes to the recitations of Eastern religions. The labor-intensive aspect of her work is a meditation practice as well as an exploration of the various forms of devotion. The work is a celebration of the diverse experiences of spirituality, as well as an acknowledgment of the desire for connection with something larger than oneself. By blurring the boundaries between religions, Hitchcock suggests that the holy word of God may be nothing more than a sublime expression of our shared humanity.

Meg Hitchcock's work is in the collections of Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Library, Yale University, Nouf Al-Saud of the Royal Family of Saudi Arabia, Christopher Rothko, New York, NY, Crystal Bridges Museum, Bentonville, AR, Sonoma County Museum, Santa Rosa, CA, to name a few. Her work has been featured in Hyperallergic, The Boston Globe, The Huffington Post, The New Criterion, Art in America and many other publications. Hitchcock earned a BFA from San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA and studied at the Fortman and Cecil-Graves Studios, Florence, Italy.

Jill Parisi is an innovative printmaker whose meticulous work alchemically changes tissue-weight paper into sculpture. Her processes include etching and digital printing on delicate and handmade papers. Her small and intricate prints are then hand-cut, hand-colored, sometimes marbled or decorated with metallic paint and embellished with feathers and fur, wrapped around structural wire and secured with fine entomology pins into deep frames or cloches. Parisi's fictional flora and fauna mimic botanical and entomological specimens but surpass even nature's most whimsical blossoms. Her work gives the impression of supernatural and enchanted specimens captured under glass for our scrutiny and pleasure.

Jill Parisi's work is in numerous private and public collections, including a permanent glass installation commissioned by Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Art for Transit Program, New York, NY. Parisi earned a MFA and BA at State University of New York at New Paltz, New Paltz, NY, where she currently teaches.

Working with a multiplicity of nontraditional media, Eleanor White strives to transform materials while honoring their innate associations. Crushed

emu or chicken eggshell, wood ash, glass beads are some the familiar materials in White's work. By her own admission, she creates "obsessively constructed objects and drawings" her passion for experimentation combined with her formal training manifest in meticulously crafted objects. White literally and metaphorically layers materials; object and meaning inform one another in her captivating work.

Eleanor White has been awarded numerous professional honors including a Fellowship in Printmaking/Drawing/Artists' Books from The New York Foundation for the Arts, the New Art Annual award from the Stamford Museum, CT, the William H. Rinehart Award from Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD, the Jacob K. Javits National Graduate Fellowship from the U.S. Department of Education, and has earned residencies at Bemis Center for Contemporary Art, Omaha, NE, and Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Sweet Briar, VA. White earned her MFA from Maryland Institute College of Art and BFA from Virginia Commonwealth University. The artist lives and works in Beacon, NY.

Digital exhibition catalogue available online.

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