

RICHARD  
GRAY  
GALLERY

VALERIE  
CARBERRY  
GALLERY

August 5, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

[Valerie Carberry Gallery](#) and [Richard Gray Gallery](#), are pleased to announce *RETREAT*, an exhibition conceived of and organized by **Theaster Gates**.

Artists have been invited by Gates to consider how the concept of retreat, either in theory or practice, contributes to a position of strength and perspective in the making of visual art. Works selected for exhibition communicate both active interpretations of retreat characterized by pressure or force and passive expressions of retreat that invoke contemplation or meditation. Participating artists — **Derrick Adams, Erika Allen, Elizabeth Axtman, Bethany Collins, Tony Lewis, Kelly Lloyd, Valerie Piraino, Mitchell Squire, Wilmer Wilson IV and Nate Young** — represent the full range of contemporary art practice in all media, including painting, drawing, photography, installation, body art and video.

Installed in adjacent gallery spaces on the 38<sup>th</sup> floor of the John Hancock Center, *RETREAT* opens to the public on Friday, August 22, and is on view through October 4. An opening reception will take place August 22, 5 - 7 p.m., with extended gallery hours until 9 p.m., for the artists and the community to celebrate. (This event is free and open to the public, although online [RSVP](#) is strongly encouraged. The RSVP link is accessible through the [Richard Gray Gallery website](#).)

As a special extension of the exhibition co-hosted by Carberry and Gray, Gates has selected Erika Allen and Mitchell Squire to create a special project booth at EXPO Chicago, September 18 - 21 at Navy Pier. Art fair attendees are invited to experience the exhibition concept of retreat in a “living architecture” space designed for respite and gathering.

A fully illustrated publication with essay contributions by **Hamza Walker** (Associate Curator and Director of Education at the Renaissance Society) and **Romi Crawford** (Associate Professor at the School of the Art Institute) will debut at EXPO Chicago.

**For inquiries please contact:**

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Tony Lewis, *Ilen doe*, 2014  
Graphite, graphite powder and tape on paper  
(Courtesy of the Artist and Shane Campbell Gallery)

## **RETREAT Artist Bios:**

**Derrick Adams** is a multidisciplinary New York based artist whose diverse practice spans collage, sculpture, performance, drawing, and video. Adams explores the force of popular culture in our lives and plays with perception in relation to objects and texts. An alumnus of The Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture and the Marie Walsh Sharpe Space Program, Adams received his MFA from Columbia University and his BFA from Pratt Institute. Work from his ongoing *Deconstruction Worker* series was most recently seen at Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago.

**Erika Allen** is an artist, activist and urban art educator focused on community based transformation through the arts. Her art practice is earth-based but spiritual, and rooted in social justice. Allen received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute and recently received her MA in art therapy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. As Chicago and National Projects Director for Growing Power, Ms. Allen has integrated creative and therapeutic techniques with food security and community development enabling her to develop nine urban agriculture and food system projects in Chicago. She actively works to create healthy and diverse food options in inner-urban city and rural communities.

**Elizabeth Axtman** is a photographer and performance artist who creates works on the complexities of love, hate, and forgiveness. Axtman received her BA from San Francisco University; a participant in The Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture summer residency program; and completed her MFA at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago in 2006.

**Bethany Collins** is a conceptual artist whose work deals with matters of racial identity through language. The Atlanta-based artist received her MFA from Georgia State University and her BA from the University of Alabama. A 2014 Studio Museum of Harlem Artist-in-Residence, Collins' work was most recently on view there in the exhibition Material Histories.

**Tony Lewis** confronts the structure and meaning of language in a body of work that is primarily made in graphite on paper. By manipulating and obscuring selected words from found quotations, Lewis analyzes language and its effects through his painstaking process of application and erasure. Lewis received his MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and his BA from Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, Pennsylvania. The artist's work was featured in the 2014 Whitney Biennial and was most recently on view at Massimo De Carlo Gallery London.

**Kelly Lloyd** is a visual artist, teacher, and student pursuing a dual MA in Visual and Critical Studies and MFA in Painting and Drawing at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Lloyd's multicultural work and study in Johannesburg, South Africa and Madurai, India during and after undergraduate studies at Oberlin College, allowed her to explore interests in social space and public art. Her current work challenges preconceived notions of symbol and meaning in familiar objects. Lloyd often uses juxtapositions to reveal inconsistencies in perceived truths.

**Valerie Piraino** is a New York based installation artist whose work explores issues of race and identity often in an historic context. Piraino who was born in Rwanda received her MFA from Columbia University and her BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art. She was artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem in 2009-2010. Her work was most recently seen at Chicago's Jane Addams Hull-House Museum in an installation entitled A Scene, Twofold, as a part of Critical Whiteness, the ongoing series of contemporary art interventions within Hull-House.

**Mitchell Squire** is a multidisciplinary artist and educator whose practice engages material culture, architecture and visual art. Known for creating highly cerebral work that explores a broad

spectrum of American culture through collecting and archiving artifacts, his work explores how these artifacts are projections of the body and how material culture becomes a lens through which to view society and history. Squire's work was seen earlier this year in the one-person exhibition *We're gonna have to do more than talk* at Carver Bank in Omaha, Nebraska, and was recently featured as an educational program at Pèrez Art Museum Miami (PAMM) in conjunction with his summer artist's residency at Cannonball in downtown Miami.

**Wilmer Wilson IV** is a performance artist whose work employs the human body in distinct ways to confront the impact of cultural histories on contemporary politics. Wilson received his BFA in photography from Howard University College of Arts and Sciences in 2012. Wilson's work *From My Paper Bag Colored Heart* was most recently seen at VOLTA NY.

**Nate Young** received his BA from Northwestern College in MN, his MFA from California Institute of the Arts and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. He is the recipient of the Bush Fellowship for Visual Artists (2010) and the Jerome Fellowship for Emerging Artists. His work has been recently included in exhibitions at the Suburban (Chicago), The Studio Museum in Harlem (New York), the California African American Museum (Los Angeles), the Soap Factory's Minnesota Biennial (Minneapolis) and a two person exhibition with Tony Lewis at Room East (New York). He is co-founder and director of the artist run exhibition space, The Bindery Projects.