

Gender and the Urban Space: Affirming the Female Gaze in Contemporary Public Art
An unprecedented, transnational collaboration of visionary female artists in Washington, DC

Panmela Castro

Panmela Castro— also known as Anarkia – is one of the best known *grafiteiras* in Rio de Janeiro. A young multi-media artist, she harnesses the power of street art to promote social change and raise awareness about women’s rights. She has successfully created and implemented a number of programs to promote women’s empowerment through art and continues to expand her organizational infrastructure and the Brazilian network of *grafiteras* who are committed to promoting women’s rights. In 2010, Panmela formed *Rede Nami*,



an urban art network of female graffiti artists that addresses gender inequality through public art. Although urban art and graffiti are accepted forms of artistic expression in Brazil, the number of females able to profile themselves in a world dominated by male artists is very small. Through *Rede Nami*, women have the opportunity to organize themselves and grow their participation in Brazilian street culture. In 2010, Panmela was honored by Vital Voices Global Partnership for her work and in 2012 she received a Diane von Furstenberg award.

Alicia Cosnahan



Alicia Cosnahan is a Washington, DC artist who paints the nickname, DECOY. She was born near Brussels, Belgium, and spent most of her childhood in the villages of Europe. Her art focuses on figures not the figures alone, but their intersection with color and space. She is especially passionate about recording her immediate surroundings with her art. The art concentrates on the situations, people and places that form daily interaction. The images chosen are the ones that leave a lasting impression, whether they are born from social encounters at work or at play. The resulting work is generally a

distorted reflection of the original idea. The idea is not to copy life, but to express artist’s memory of it. Ms. Cosnahan utilizes her talent and experience to create art with young students in Perry Center on daily basis and irregularly through workshops in collaboration with Albus Cavus, The Fridge DC, CHAW, Smith Center, DC Public Library, and other wonderful partners who allowed her to creatively connect with DC children and youth.

She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from Berry College in Rome, GA in 2001. She also studied at Studio Arts Centers International and Fuji Studios both of Florence, Italy. In the past few years her work has been featured in Modern Luxury, Capitol File, Worn Magazine, BBC world News, The Washington Post, Extreme Home Makeover and more. In Washington, DC she has created murals Seasons in the City, From Edgewood to the Edge of the World, Sousa’s New Marching Band and other large scale works of art.

Chanel Compton

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Chanel Compton is an artist, educator and artistic curator based in Washington, DC and currently works as Director of Education in Prince George's African American Museum & Cultural Center. Previously, she ran After-school Art Program at Perry Center and the Studio Africa Program from the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, where she developed regular art and education programs such as workshops and performances, and projects focused on integrating the museum with schools and community institutions.

For her belief that encouraging artistic expression improves the quality of one's life and the welfare of urban communities, Chanel Compton has been standing out as a mural painter in U.S. public areas and in different other countries. Past projects include mural "Sousa's New Marching Band", in addition to a cooperation with the ABC's show Extreme Makeover, which resulted on a mural for the Fishing School. In 2009, she received financing from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities to develop the project "Imagine and Create Workshop" for the Arch Training Center. Recently, Ms. Compton was selected by the U.S. Department of State to travel to Brazil, where she created three large works of community art.

The young artist began her career as an assistant curator at the Studio Museum, in Harlem. She was, then, invited to run the summer program of the Samadhi Buddhist Meditation Center on the Czech Republic. Upon her return to the U.S., she coordinated the art and education program from Abrakadoodle elementary school and assistant curator of the Transformer Gallery, both in Washington, DC (2007-08). She was also the curator of "Critical Exposure Presents: Picture Equality", a collective exhibit by young artists and several collaborative mural painting projects which involved groups of twenty to thirty artists. Chanel Compton also developed special projects for institutions such as Critical Exposure and The Pink Line Project.

Helen Warren



Helen Warren is a 16 year old artist, born and raised in DC. She started creating street art and urban installments at age 13, and since has specialized in wheat pasting and print making. Recently she has learned how to screen print and has begun a small t-shirt company called Cold Feet Shirts, which features her work on t-shirts and sweaters. Drawing inspiration, she inspired by artists such as Pat Perry, Peregrine Honig, and Josh Keys. Although young her dream is to be able to live in thrive solely off of creating art work.

Quest Skinner

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Quest Skinner has been painting for over 15 years. She works in a plethora of mediums which is as seasonal as the creativity in her style. Many of her signature pieces can only be purchased according to the season. Over the past years it's been an exploration of feminine figures as well as a dynamic array of colors. Her work is constantly evolving pushing boundaries of mixed media, acrylics, casting, molds, and so much more. As an independent contractor she finds galleries not to be the only way to define a great artist.

Elizabeth Stewart



Elizabeth Stewart is from Glendale, California. She studied Fine Arts at Howard University where she received her Bachelor's Degree. She currently resides and works in Washington DC. Elizabeth has participated in live painting shows, numerous art events such as Art-o-matic and Jack Daniels sponsored Arts, Beats and Lyrics. Elizabeth has also participated in numerous group art shows including M3 and a showing at Busboys and Poets. She has even been mentioned online by NBC Washington. Her influences include the art of Keith Haring, and Chuck Close.

Nebsi



Nebsi Camacho is a DC-based tattoo and graffiti artist, originally from Tijuana Baja California MX. That's where her passion for urban art began when she, as a 5-year old girl riding a bus, noticed a young man tagging one of the seats. He caught her looking and brought his finger to his mouth to signal "...shhh, don't tell." At that early age she questioned it: "Why is he asking me to be quiet? He's just writing. What's wrong with that?"

That opened up a completely new world to her. Graffiti as an art form, kept her involved in creating

art, despite often forced to struggle as the only girl in boys' territory. In TJ it was not lady-like to burn pieces around the city. That did not discourage her and she has been painting since 2006. Today, Nebsi transforms her art into murals, canvases and tattoos. She is actively involved in the local art scene,

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producing live events and publications. One of her most recent exhibits includes Albus Cavus show in Joan Hisaoka Art Gallery and Graffiti on Skin Calendar she has produced.

Lisa Marie Thalhammer



With her bold use of color and exaggerated, geometric portraiture, Lisa Marie Thalhammer creates artwork that engages the viewer on a visceral, nearly tangible level. The majority of her work focuses on the female form with distorted proportions that challenge conventional ideas of the empowered, modern woman. Her figures' expressive eyes, angular jawline and limbs, posed with masculine objects, combine to convey the sharp, tough femininity of her characters.

Lisa Marie grew up around travelers while working at her family-owned St. Louis East Truck Plaza. After studying at the Art Institute of Chicago and Staffordshire University in Stoke-on-Trent, England, Lisa Marie received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting with Honors with double minors in Women Studies & Art History from the University of Kansas in 2003. Selected awards included the Amsden Award, the Hollander Family Foundation Award, the Daniel Macmorris Scholarship, the Warner Ferguson Service Scholarship and the Jacobs Prize.

After relocating to Washington DC, where she currently lives and works, Thalhammer created numerous portrait paintings, and is well known for her Girls with Guns series. Funded by the DC Commission of the Arts and Humanities, an agency supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, Lisa Marie created her first major public art work in 2009, titled Boxer Girl, located at 1st & W Streets NW in the nation's capital. The piece sparked a significant level of controversy, which was covered in numerous local and national publications, such as MSNBC Washington and ARTNET NEWS.

Solo exhibitions include Welcome to Lizard County at G Fine Arts - reviewed by The Washington Post and The Washington City Paper - and Lizards Live at The Butcher's Daughter Contemporary Art in Ferndale, MI. Recent showings in international art fairs & festivals include PULSE and No Soul for Sale in New York City and Aqua Art at Miami Art Basel. She has also shown her artworks with Transformer in Washington DC and at Manifest Equality in Los Angeles, CA. She has appeared on the cover of the Washington Blade and recently received a Ponies Choice Award for Best Visual Artist, voted on by the public readers of Washington DC's Brightest Young Things. www.lisamariestudio.com

Maggie Michael

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Maggie Michael lives and works in Washington, DC. Michael holds an MFA from American University, an MA from San Francisco State University and a BFA from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. She has completed an Artist Research Fellowship with the Smithsonian Institution and an Artist Residency at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, both in Washington, DC. Michael participated in Jan Verwoert's residency *Why Are Conceptual Artists Painting Again? Because They Think it is a Good Idea* at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada. Michael was awarded a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant, The

Trawick Prize, and a Young Artist Fellowship from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, an organization supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts. Michael's work has been exhibited in international galleries and nonprofit, private and public collections including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the University of Maryland, George Mason University, the US ART in Embassies Program, and the Federal Reserve Board. Michael's work has been featured in *At Length* and *New American Paintings* magazines and reviewed in *The Washington Post*, *Art Papers*, and *Art in America*.

Rosina Teri Memolo



Rosina Teri Memolo is a fine artist and commercial photographer in Washington, DC, who is known for her urban inspired images. Rosina serves as a visual archaeologist by digging into our human culture to document what she finds. Her images are intuitive, sometimes even happy accidents; they stay with you and provoke memories, thoughts and emotions.

In addition to her fine art offerings and her depicting street and music culture in books such as *Streetworld* and *Enamelized*, as well as *Swindle* and *Urb* magazines, Rosina has also provided commercial photographic services for events, advertising, portraits and product shots. She invests her time outside of her personal work and clients, in the community teaching young people to make a difference by harnessing and training their creativity.

Dominique Ines Alston

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Dominique Ines Alston is currently a college student at Towson University working towards her BFA (Bachelors of Fine Arts) in Graphic Design. Dominique takes interests in many forms of art and recently began to explore in Screen-printing and Street Art. Even though she may have novice experience in Graffiti and Street Art, she has always been drawn towards the culture and movement from a young age by admiring the talent and creativity that is involved. Even though this young artist has not yet made a name for herself or began an artistic career professionally, she is ambitious and excited to what the future has to offer and to show what she is capable of

creating.