

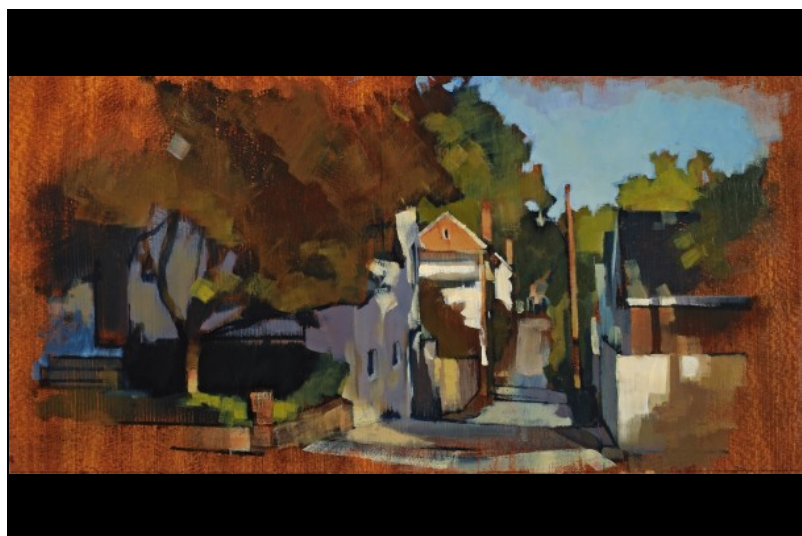
# Museums



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## D.C. gallery shows: 'Then and Now: 40 Years,' 'Fall Solos 2013,' 'Against the Bias'



CAPTION

By Mark Jenkins, Published: December 14 [E-mail the writer](#)

Drawing on several centuries of oil painting, Carlton Fletcher makes pictures that meld classical and impressionist techniques. If the results seem detached from any particular age, they're often place specific. The Washington painter, whose "Then and Now: 40 Years" is at Jane Haslem Gallery, frequently depicts his home town, from views of Battery Kemble Park to an epic tableau of demonstrators at Dupont Circle.

Although the show is a career retrospective that includes two prints, the work is primarily painting and mostly recent. Among the larger pieces are a self-portrait that emphasizes the artist's tools over his face, and "In the Waves," a realistic 1992 depiction of an anguished family that looks like something an American realist such as Thomas Eakins could have painted a century earlier.

The works from the past five years are mostly smaller horizontal landscapes. They often portray modest city neighborhoods, but sometimes they are bucolic scenes. Whatever the subject, Fletcher's work has gotten looser without sacrificing any precision. "W Street Alley" and "Angler's Dusk" confirm the artist's mastery of light and gesture. The former is framed by mottled red that must be autumn leaves; the

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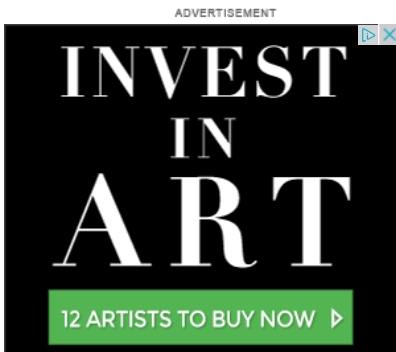
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latter highlights twilight-blue hills and meadows with a perfect splash of green foliage. Reducing a bush to a few brushstrokes might be simple, but it's not easy.

**Then and Now: 40 years — Paintings and Prints by Carlton Fletcher**

*On view through Dec. 23 at Jane Haslem Gallery, 2025 Hillyer Pl. NW, 202-232-4644, [www.janehaslemgallery.com](http://www.janehaslemgallery.com).*



**Fall Solos 2013**

Seven artists are in the **Arlington Art Center**'s "Fall Solos 2013," each in her or his own gallery. Many offer personal work, although Matthew Fishel's "Relaunch" responds to its space: The three-screen animated video riffs on the graphic motifs of the building's trio of 1930s stained-glass windows (attributed to Tiffany Studios). But comparing Fishel's morphing floral motifs

with the those in the stationary original is impossible, because the large screens block the windows.

Chinese-bred area artist Ping Shen defines herself through her mastery of traditional Chinese watercolor painting, notably in an exquisite scroll painting, "Ancient Beauties." Shen is not limited to historical subjects, however. There's a realistic painting, unusually large for a watercolor, of a young woman on a bicycle, as well as a Western-looking portrait of a Western-looking woman.

Autobiography is most explicit in Kristina Bilonick's "Folklore," which views her family's connection to Panama from multiple angles. Sculpture, painting and audio are among the array, along with three sibling recollections of being on a small plane hit by lightning. If personal history is tangled, things get even knottier when the wider world enters: The bit players in Bilonick's multimedia bildungsroman include Patty Hearst and Manuel Noriega, and the latter is remembered with a mix tape that includes "I Fought the Law."

Jennie Thwing puts her paint-spattered self at the center of a stop-action video of a ever-mutating room; stills and a wall painting mirror instants in the jumpy, colorful metamorphosis. Paul Thulin's "Pine Tree Ballads" is an elaborate if opaque installation on themes of trees, wood, poetry and lightning. The other soloists are Stephanie Williams, who does stuffed sculptures of meaty tubes and sacs, and Amy Chan, whose brightly engaging paintings mix recognizable forms into hard-edged abstract compositions.

**Fall Solos 2013**

*On view through Dec. 21 at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd.; Arlington. 703-248-6800; [www.arlingtonartscenter.org](http://www.arlingtonartscenter.org).*

**Looking Forward**

Randall Scott Projects' current group show is titled "Looking Forward" because it includes work by several artists who will get solo turns at the gallery next year. But the five-person exhibition also does some looking back, both in content and style. Thus the selection includes two recent pieces by James Busby, whose work was shown at the gallery recently,

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and four photographs by Chris Anthony, who uses the tintype process introduced (and then largely abandoned) in the 19th century.

The five don't share much aside from meticulous craftsmanship. The most similar are Si Jae Byun (the only local artist) and Amy Myers; both execute detailed drawings/paintings that are abstract yet have elements suggesting medical or botanical illustrations. Anthony depicts the natural world more explicitly with his small photos of seahorses, a series titled "Hippocampus."

More industrially, Natalie Dunham stacks rounds of cut screen into columns; the material's floppiness makes the circles oscillate in different patterns within the same repeated cylindrical format. Busby layers paint, graphite and gesso on panels that he sands and grooves, giving them a metallic sheen. Blacks and grays dominate, but the red that glows subtly within "Seconds" shows that these pieces' depths are no less lustrous than their surfaces.

### Looking Forward

*On view through Dec. 21 at Randall Scott Projects, 1326 H St. NE, 2nd Fl.; 202-417-4872; [www.randallscottprojects.com](http://www.randallscottprojects.com).*

### Against the Bias

Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery has been yarn-bombed. The U Street art space's facade is dripping with fabric vines, and a knitted garden sits atop its storefront window. The thematic thread leads inside to "Against the Bias," a show made from scraps and strands. Its sentry is a six-foot-high fabric cactus fashioned by Stacy Cantrell, who also led the 13-person Yarn-Bomb Dream Team to craft the exterior display.

Yarn is not the only material. Jimmy Miracle's boxes are made of wood and lined with black velvet, whose dark depths set off the light that shimmers on piano-wire-like filaments. Emily Biondo's four wall sculptures resemble large doilies, but at their centers are small speakers that murmur different monologues by "accomplished female professionals." Lily deSaussure embroiders small faces in white thread on white paper, while Jo Hamilton's larger self-portrait is colorful and crocheted.

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The most vivid contrast comes in Jesse Harrod's "Late Bloomers," whose four tendrils are covered by a riot of cloth remnants and topped with roughly shaped concrete caps. The piece's four arms have a childlike exuberance, and the heavy tops provide a sobering counterweight.

### Against the Bias

*On view through Dec. 21 at Joan Hisaoka Healing Arts Gallery, 1632 U St. NW; 202-483-8600;*

[www.smithcenter.org/arts-healing/joan-hisaoka-art-gallery.html](http://www.smithcenter.org/arts-healing/joan-hisaoka-art-gallery.html).

*Jenkins is a freelance writer.*

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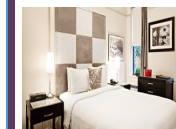
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I give the Jane Haslem Gallery credit for showing the entire exhibition online. More galleries should do this.

"Angler's Dusk" is actually the most striking picture in the show. It best expresses the artist's statement: "Like Poussin, Claude, and Turner he uses the landscape as a metaphor to let us see our world anew. He is a 'plein air' artist in search of that right moment when physical reality is transformed, usually by light, into an ideal representation."

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