

FLASHPOINT

A CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PROJECT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Gallery at Flashpoint Presents Nellie Appleby, Vita Litvak & Amanda Sauer: *Anima Mundi*



(left to right) Amanda Sauer, Nellie Appleby and Vita Litvak

February 14 – March 29, 2008

Opening reception: Thursday, February 14: 6-8pm

WASHINGTON, DC – *Anima Mundi* (soul of the world from Latin), a playful dramatization of the admittedly broad but nevertheless eternally fascinating subject matter of *nature* and *being*, features the work of Amanda Sauer, Nellie Appleby and Vita Litvak. Working in varied mediums of photography, installation and video, the artists share a desire to experience and portray the awe-inspiring. Their distinct visions intertwine to at once revere, complicate and question the human relationship to the natural world

Sauer's large format color photographs of controlled natural environments, such as parks, nature centers and zoos, suggest imagined narratives that confuse the boundaries between "natural" and human, reality and fantasy, truth and manipulation. Through illusions created with color, light and reflection, Sauer's landscapes evoke tension between the desire for magic and beauty in nature and the apprehension of control and deceit underlying these contrived spaces.

Appleby extends her photographs' and films' meanings by contextualizing them with such ephemera as drawings, houseplants, tire planters, newspaper clippings, terrariums and the mysterious unknown. These layered sculptural works gesture to the elaborateness of nature as subject matter. Appleby's multi-media installation creates an open-ended investigation into the nature/culture dynamic that is ultimately celebratory in spirit yet not without the stings of contemporary reality.

Litvak presents a series of large-scale photographs of people experiencing the ocean. In pairs or on their own, bodies are strikingly vulnerable against the vastness of water and sky. With the gaze set on the horizon, only the body and its gesture express what is seen in the distance. Litvak's minimally composed video, *The Great Lake*, offers viewers a meditative horizon for their own interpretation and personal reflection.

Together, Sauer, Appleby and Litvak create an environment where their own distinct concerns about nature interact in a

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synergistic exchange of conceptual and visual approaches. *Anima Mundi* opens at the Gallery at Flashpoint on Valentine's Day, with an artists' reception from 6 – 8pm.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Nellie Appleby is from the mountains of Virginia and spent much of her childhood in Africa. She earned a BA in Anthropology from the University of Virginia and a MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2007. Her work has been shown in numerous galleries and she has received several grants, including the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship, the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Graduate Fellowship and most recently a grant from the Sierra Club to monitor the health of the majestic Clinch River in Southwest Virginia.

Vita Litvak was born in Moldova in 1980 and immigrated to Philadelphia, PA in 1992. She earned a BA in Fine Arts from Haverford College, completed a two-year post baccalaureate program in photography at Bucknell University and is currently an MFA candidate at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Amanda Sauer received her MFA from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2007 and her BA from Cornell University in 2000. She has won several grants, awards and fellowships, including the Thesis Dissertation Fellowship from VCU and has exhibited nationally in numerous group shows, including the 2005 WPA\C Options Biennial. Sauer currently lives in Arlington, Virginia.

ABOUT THE GALLERY AT FLASHPOINT PROGRAM

The **Gallery at Flashpoint** is dedicated to nurturing artists, expanding their visibility and encouraging dialogue between artists and arts patrons. As a nonprofit gallery, Flashpoint provides a special opportunity for artists and curators to present new media, site-specific installations, performance pieces and other experimental forms free from the constraints of commercial expectations. An advisory panel of noted artists and arts professionals oversees the programming for the gallery and provides mentorship and support to exhibiting artists. The Gallery at Flashpoint is sponsored by the Abrams Family Foundation and the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities. Additional support is provided by the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, the MARPAT Foundation, the Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts and many other sponsors. Hotel Helix is Flashpoint's 2007-2008 Hotel Partner.

ABOUT FLASHPOINT

Flashpoint, a Cultural Development Corporation project, is a non-profit, multi-disciplinary arts space dedicated to nurturing emerging artists and cultural organizations in order to build their professional capacity. Flashpoint provides services and training for cultural organizations to help strengthen their management capacity and offers exhibit and performance spaces that enable arts groups to focus on their artistic goals and expand their visibility. Flashpoint includes a contemporary art gallery, the 75-seat Mead Theatre Lab, the Coors Dance Studio and shared office space for arts organizations.

Nellie Appleby, Vita Litvak & Amanda Sauer: *Anima Mundi*

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Exhibition: February 14 – March 29, 2008

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 12-6 pm or by appointment

For more information: Call 202.315.1310 or visit flashpointdc.org

Gallery at Flashpoint • 916 G Street, NW • Washington, DC 20001

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