

## SUMMER STOCK

DC'S GALLERY SCENE COMES ALIVE WITH FOUR SHOWS THIS SEASON.



### **RACHEL SCHMIDT**

Schmidt imagines cities after some unknown future apocalyptic event; although the people are mostly gone, her dense downtowns—part sculpture, part photography, part collage—are far from uninhabited. *June 5–July 2, Flashpoint Gallery, 916 G St. NW, 202-315-1305; culturaldc.org*

### **RACHEL FARBIARZ, DEB SOKOLOW, LAVAR MUNROE**

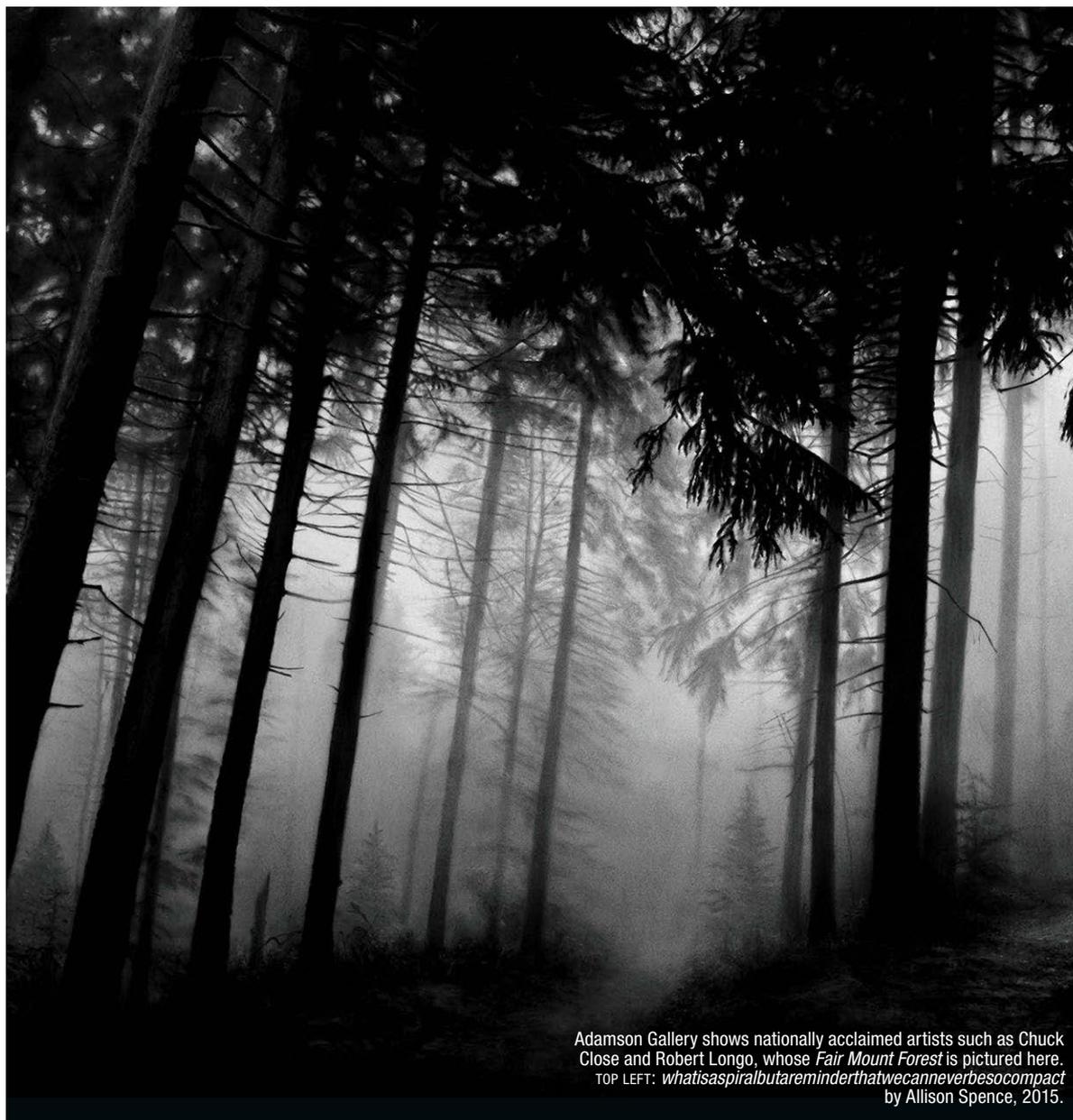
This group show runs the gamut of draftsmanship, featuring works by Farbiarz (known for large-scale installations, sculpture, and text-based collages), Munroe (a painter of rich canvases and installations), and Sokolow (whose works feature hand-drawn text and comic illustration). *June 6–July 13, G Fine Art, 4718 14th St. NW, 202-462-1601; gfineartdc.com*

### **WILLIAM CHRISTENBERRY**

Christenberry has captured homes and retailers that have fallen into disrepair in his native Hale County, Alabama. More recently, he has turned to sculpture, paintings, and prints to depict a Southern gothic that is giving way to the creep of kudzu and memory. *June 10–August 1, Hemphill Fine Arts, 1515 14th St. NW, Ste. 300, 202-234-5601; hemphillfinearts.com*

### **ALLISON SPENCE, LISA DILLIN**

Spence's "mass" paintings borrow the comic sensibility and painterly texture of artists like George Condo. Dillin's sculptures invoke everyday circumstances in which humans act just a little more like animals than they normally do. This show promises a light touch. *June 27–August 1, Hamiltonian Gallery, 1353 U St. NW, Ste. 101, 202-332-1116; hamiltoniangallery.com*



Adamson Gallery shows nationally acclaimed artists such as Chuck Close and Robert Longo, whose *Fair Mount Forest* is pictured here. TOP LEFT: *whatisaspiralbutaremindert hatwecanneverbesocompact* by Allison Spence, 2015.

## STATE OF THE ART

*THE DISTRICT'S ART SCENE HAS BEEN IN FLUX FOR THE PAST DECADE—BUT IT'S READYING FOR AN UPSWING. BY KRISTON CAPPS*

Any major city looking to cultivate a thriving art scene needs two things: artists and buyers. In Los Angeles, it's the Hollywood juggernaut that creates the collector base for LA artists and galleries. In New York, the real estate and finance sectors are where you'll find the city's art collectors. Tech czars amassing their wealth in Silicon Valley don't spend much of it on art in San Francisco, but the hope there is that they'll come around.

In one respect, today's gallery scene in Washington, DC, is standing strong: Its artists produce work worthy of any second city in the nation. But political gridlock in the nation's capital, coupled with the fallout from the 2010 burst of the law-school bubble, has hemmed in the market for fine art in the District at a time of unprecedented growth for the city.

At one point, galleries were ready to ride the wave. In 2003, when the city's explosive growth was just beginning to surge, several art dealers moved from the safe enclaves of Georgetown and Dupont Circle to 14th Street NW, which was then a former automotive showcase corridor marked by burned-out buildings and boarded-up windows—the legacy of the riots still very much visible. Storefront galleries and white-cube spaces—namely Fusebox, Transformer, G Fine Art, Adamson Gallery, Hemphill Fine Arts, and Curator's Office—turned 14th Street into the heart of the visual art scene.

Each gallery played a different vital role. Transformer, a nonprofit incubator, held true to the city's punk and hard-core music roots, hosting shows by young and untested artists in a microgallery setting. Andrea Pollan and George Hemphill, art dealers behind Curator's Office and Hemphill Fine Arts, respectively, built spaces to host their strong stables of local and national artists. Annie Gawlak—who joined Pollan, Hemphill, and Laurie Adamson in a gallery building at 1515 14th Street—