

## **PRESS RELEASE**

St. Louis, December 1, 2016 — Bruno David presents four solo exhibitions by Leslie Laskey, Damon Freed, Sarah Harford and Jill Downen.

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 12, 2017, from 5 to 9 pm

Exhibitions Dates: January 12 – February 18, 2017

Gallery Talk with the artists: Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm

**LESLIE LASKEY** *Duets*

**DAMON FREED** *Landscapes*

**JILL DOWNEN** *Cornerstone*

**SARAH HARFORD** *Swing*

For general information and press inquiries  
please contact us at  
[info@brunodavidgallery.com](mailto:info@brunodavidgallery.com)

Leslie Laskey, Damon Freed, Jill Downen,  
Sarah Harford, Bruno L. David, Cleo Kelly  
are available for interviews.

Bruno David Gallery  
7513 Forsyth Boulevard  
Clayton, MO 63105

Free and open to the public  
Wednesday through Saturday  
11 am – 6 pm  
Also open by appointment

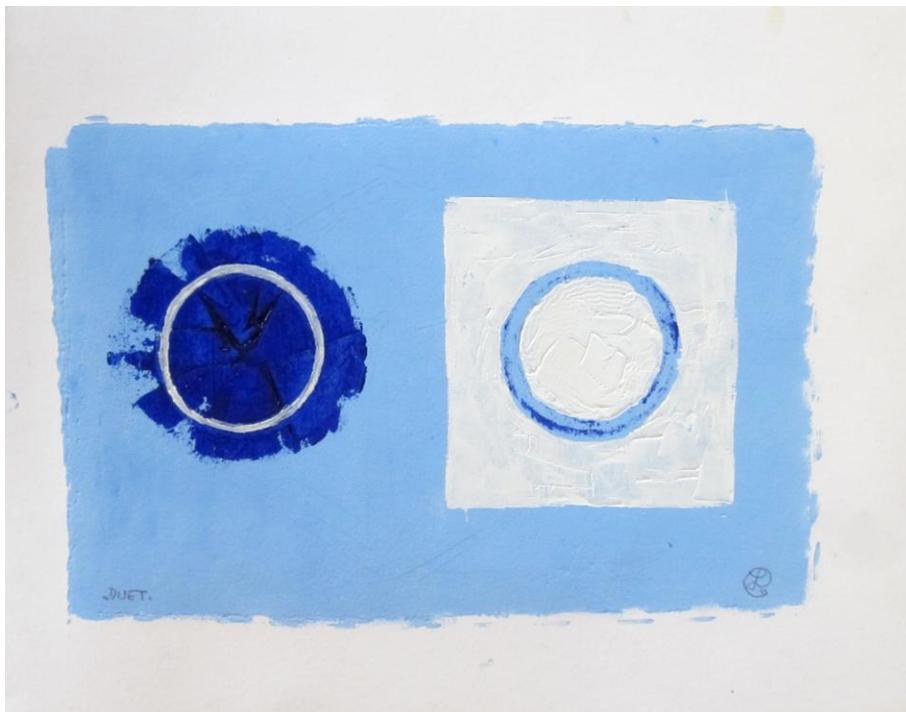
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Contact:  
Bruno L. David - Director/Owner  
Cleo Kelly - Assistant Director

Marking the artist's ninth solo exhibition with the gallery, **Leslie Laskey** presents a new exhibition of recent paintings and sculptures titled "Duets".

Leslie Laskey, now 96 years old, is one of the most successful and experienced working artists in the Mid-West and St. Louis area. He is an innovative thinker whose work never fails to make an impact on viewer perceptions. His new series "Duets", created in the last two years in St. Louis, Key West, and Michigan, will not disappoint his followers and supporters.

Leslie Laskey's media of choice is ever changing, and characteristic of his work. In this new oeuvre, he incorporates collage, oil paint, acrylic, and crayon. It is this variety of media and style, which adds to the engaging quality of his work and its subsequent effect on viewers. In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery Publications will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an exhibition history and bibliography.



Born in Michigan in 1921, Laskey served in a combat unit in Europe and was among the troops that landed on Omaha Beach, early on D-Day, 1944. He studied at Indiana University and at the Institute of Design in Chicago (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) with founder and American Bauhaus pioneer Lászlò Moholy-Nagy. Currently, he divides his time between St. Louis and Manistee, Michigan and is a

Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis.

Marking the artist's fifth solo exhibition with the gallery, **Damon Freed** presents an exhibition titled "Landscapes". In conjunction with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery Publications will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an exhibition history and bibliography.

Freed writes on this new series of work "I work directly from nature to create my charcoal drawings and I make fully chromatic oil paintings from the drawings afterwards inside of the studio. This is my process and much to do with the final paintings stems from the initial energy invested and displayed onto the surface of the drawings. The early marks in the drawings, the bold zags and swipes and squiggles feed the color and excitement of the paintings.

It must be said that my color is not naturalistic, or, at least not naturalistic in its faithfulness to nature. My color is faithful to my spirit, to the spontaneity and pizzazz of my sitting in nature in the spring and summer communing with the light of the sun, the invigorating wind, and amongst the delight of fresh cut grass, new growth, and scented flowers. My pictures are as much depictions of myself in this way as they are of the internal structure and sensations of nature.



And it is difficult to speak of structure considering my landscape paintings. The kind of structure I find in nature is often not rigid, but flowing and lively, like the emotions and the spirit. Even if architecture is a part of my vision, I paint it without an edge, without the strict laws of perspective. It is true that I start most of my paintings with a black outline of sorts, a loosely knitted structure. The color often comes later and is frequently informed by the energy of the drawn marks, tones, and squiggles, which is to say, my color does not follow the rules

given us by nature. You may well discover a pink tree or a purple field in one of my paintings.

And this brings me to my indebtedness to the Post-Impressionist's and to the Fauve's use of color. It was van Gogh, Gauguin, Derain and Gabriele Munter and Matisse and Kandinsky that first utilized arbitrary coloration to fulfill their inner emotions and stylistic desires. Therefore, my paintings follow, in a way, this tradition of individualistic correspondence with nature."

Damon Freed works and lives in Missouri. He received a M.F.A. from Hunter College, New York, and a B.F.A. from the School of Visual Arts, New York.

In the Media Arts Room, the gallery presents a video work “Cornerstone” by **Jill Downen**.

Downen, known for her white on white wall installations of abstracted bodily forms emerging from architecture, continues to draw on the idea that the human body shares an interdependent relationship to buildings. The three-minute video, created in 2008, zooms in on a stack of real bricks on the artist’s own body. The simple act of breathing, under the weight of building materials, captures a moment of time that is humorous, visceral, and vulnerable. The subtle and rhythmic sensibility Downen brings to video poses metaphoric possibilities about gravity, support and the protection of human fragility within the frame of architecture. While Downen’s art is rooted in site-responsive installation, “Cornerstone” is a video project characteristic of her interdisciplinary approach to uncover new aspects of established boundaries. Downen’s art is a focused investigation of the symbiotic relationship between the human body and architecture expressed in temporal installations, drawings, and models. Her art envisions a place of interdependent relation between the human body and architecture, where the exchanging forces and tensions of construction, deterioration, and restoration emerge as thematic possibilities.



Jill Downen has received numerous awards including the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, the MacDowell Colony National Endowment for the Arts residency, and Cité International des Arts Residency in Paris. She has created site specific installations for museums such as American University Museum in Washington

DC, the Oklahoma City Museum of Art, and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis Great Rivers Biennial and its 10th Anniversary exhibition, Place is the Space. Downen has been invited to lecture about her work extensively, including the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. and the Luce Irigaray Circle Philosophy Conference in New York. Her art has been reviewed in publications including *Art in America*, *Sculpture Magazine*, *Art Papers*, *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *The New York Times* and *Bad at Sports*. She holds a BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute and an MFA as a Danforth Scholar from Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts - Washington University in St. Louis. Jill Downen is currently an assistant professor of sculpture at the Kansas City Art Institute.

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In the “Window on Forsyth” space, the gallery continues to present “Swing” by **Sarah Harford**.



*Swing*, is a sculpture installation depicting a chandelier structure stranded with broken headlight and taillight plastic. The artist harvested these shards from the casted metal bodies that were once extensions of our lives, traded in for newer and updated versions of ourselves. A light timer switch, used to deter home invaders, signifies the imagery of headlights performing as household appliances. As the

sequenced lighting ignites the suspended object, fractured shadows scatter across the space. This effect intends to unveil the presence of violence by challenging the viewer’s understanding of their everyday realms through the manipulation of structure and material.

Sarah Harford received her B.F.A. from Truman State University and her M.F.A. from Sam Fox School of Visual Arts, Washington University in St. Louis. She currently works and lives in St. Louis, Missouri.



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## GALLERY TALK

Saturday  
February 11th  
4 pm

For general information and press inquiries please contact Bruno L. David - Director/Owner or Cleo Kelly at [info@brunodavidgallery.com](mailto:info@brunodavidgallery.com)

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### ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

Specializing in contemporary art, Bruno David Gallery and Bruno David Projects has been a leading art gallery since its establishment in Saint Louis in 2005. Bruno David represents some of the most innovative artists practicing in Saint Louis, along with artists of international reputation. Bruno David Gallery's art program introduces new contemporary art to local gallery visitors, and is discussed in publications including, *Art in America*, *Art Papers*, *ArtNet Magazine*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Follow the gallery on **TWITTER** @bdavidgallery and @bdavidprojects and via the hashtags #BrunoDavidGallery #BrunoDavidProjects #GoSeeArt #BrunoDavidGalleryPublications #LeslieLaskey #DamonFreed #JillDownen #SarahHarford

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*Bruno David Gallery was first established by Bruno David in New York City (1983) and later in St. Louis (2005).*

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### BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

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Wednesday through Saturday 11 am - 6 pm

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