

PRESS RELEASE

February 7, 2014

BRUNO DAVID GALLERY
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SHANE SIMMONS: *TELESCOPIC*

March 7 – 29, 2014

Opening Reception: Friday, March 7th, from 5:00 to 9:00 pm

SHAWN BURKARD

Formations (Front Room)

HEATHER BENNETT

Rivington (New Media Room)

Bruno David is delighted to present a special exhibition *Telescopic* by Shane Simmons. The opening reception will be Friday, March 7, 2014 from 5 to 9 pm. On the same night, Grand Center's First Fridays will also be from 5 to 9 pm. Every first Friday of the month, museums and galleries in St. Louis' Grand Center are free and open to the public until 9 pm. Discover the neighborhood's remarkable array of visual arts at nine venues all within walking distance of each other.

For further information, please contact the gallery at info@brunodavidgallery.com or at +1.314.531.3030.



Shane Simmons has spent the last few decades on the construction of an internal exploratory apparatus through the practice of painting. He sees painting as being entwined at the very root of the mysterious stage of our evolution in which we as a species invented a new type of power through the generation of culture, thereby acquiring some of our most essential tools for communication, propagation, and progress.

Believing that painting still holds promise as an effective method for accessing, describing, recording and transmitting the details of remote aspects of the human experience, he has sought to discover empirical information about the nature of the millennial struggle of the human animal to understand its self and its environment. He seeks to do so not only through a sincere pursuit of the perfection of the craft, but by simultaneously positioning himself in direct contact with a substantial sampling of a vast array of human artifacts old and new through his work as an art handler.

In this collection of paintings, he submits a record of images developed using this equipment and presents us with those visions. This show marks Simmons' first solo exhibition with the gallery. A fully illustrated book accompanies the exhibition.

Shane Simmons lives and works in St. Louis, Missouri.

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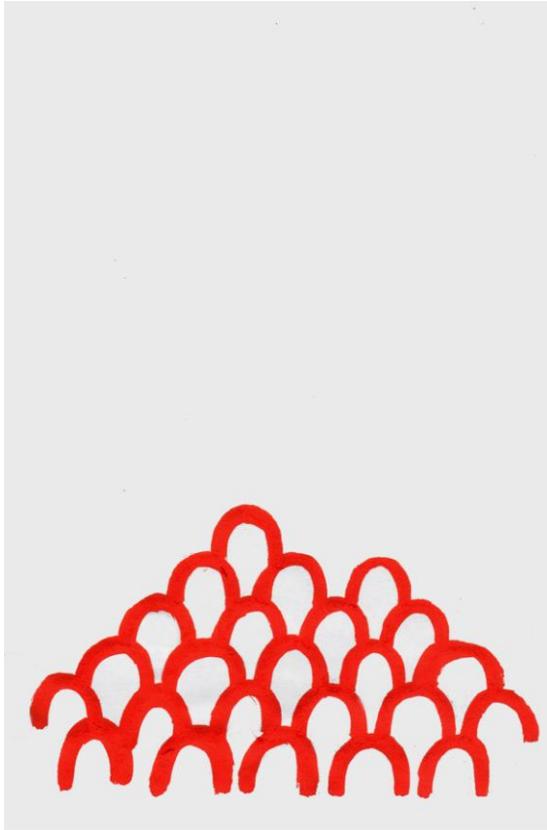


In the **New Media Room**, the gallery presents a video “Rivington” by **Heather Bennett**.

Rivington is a strangely telling document. Once the concept is set, the location rented, the props in place, composition directives given and make-up applied, there is only to sit in a rumpled white bed and play the part of the intended fiction. *Rivington* records 35 minutes of the last part of this process in the making of the image *Charlotte* in 2006. *Charlotte* is a tongue in cheek portrayal of the sexually charged cliché of the older, jaded woman preying on/being preyed upon by the carefree young man. It is a scene we all know but from no particular source. This version is intended to disrupt our acceptance with a paraphrase of the same media driven language with which we are acutely yet carelessly familiar, with a few major tweaks. The most predominate of which is a subject/object reversal. In the video, the artist taking the part of the woman is seen in the particular point of the image construction where the subject must play the object. The uncomfortable vacillation between the two is visibly palpable here. Our erstwhile Charlotte must subsume herself and imitate the object in order for the critique to function, however for the very same reason, the presence of the subject must remain. Hovering on this precipice, the subject slightly emerges and is demurely checked by the artist with a deference to those assisting who are capable of viewing the scene. The subject worries about the addition of unwanted props, scene cropping, the placement of the sunlight, silently, while impersonating the object. Around this struggle, we see the aesthetic recital of the composed scene with reality as a backdrop in the form of the typical surroundings of a photo shoot; an existing soundtrack, off camera banter between friends acting as assistants and the authoritative voice of the anonymous photographer keeping time.

As with the other pieces in the body of work entitled “Sidetrack,” *Rivington* leaves the artist slightly vulnerable and somewhat exposed as we are allowed to watch her struggle for the balance between forgery and criticism. She slowly metes out her control with a staccato reticence, wavering within the pregnant poles of her heated appropriation. *Rivington* is a circuitous document, which is made before the mechanisms of the finished piece take hold, giving us an ironic insight into the conclusions towards which the final work nudges. In the end, the male model for the ‘carefree young man’ pulls up his pants front and center of the camera and both figures walk away leaving us staring at an empty bed and maybe wondering what was there in the first place. *Rivington* was first shown in 2010 at the Stephan Stoyanov Gallery.

Heather Bennett lives and works in New York City and St. Louis, Missouri. She is currently an Artist in Residence at the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis.



In the **Front Room**, the gallery presents an exhibition “Formations” by **Shawn Burkard**. This new series of small drawings formed through a gradual accumulation of odd geometric shapes overlapped to obscurity. They derived from the drawing process of ink lines that bleed through the paper onto the sheet of paper under the top layer. Each drawing layer stemmed from the drawing before it, like reverse erosion. Each drawing organically created the next drawing, a cycle of drawing and redrawing layers. This show marks Burkard’s fourth solo exhibition with the gallery. A fully illustrated book accompanies the exhibition.

Shawn Burkard lives and works in St. Louis, Missouri.

ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

Specializing in contemporary art, Bruno David Gallery has been a leading art gallery since its establishment in St. Louis in 2005. Bruno David represents some of the most innovative artists practicing in St. Louis, along with artists of international reputation. Located in a renovated industrial building in Midtown St. Louis, Grand Center arts district, the Gallery is directly opposite the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM), and is in close proximity to the Sheldon Art Galleries, The Fox Theatre, and Powell Symphony Hall. 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*.

Please join the conversation with Bruno David Gallery on Twitter ([@bdavidgallery](https://twitter.com/bdavidgallery)), Facebook (facebook.com/bruno.david.gallery), Google+ (plus.google.com/112677784125453318003)

See our videos/interviews on VIMEO (vimeo.com/brunodavidgallery) and on YouTube (youtube.com/user/brunodavidgallery). Read our news on our blog GoodArtNews (goodartnews.com/). View our Ebook publications (issuu.com/brunodavidgallery). Purchase our publications (lulu.com/spotlight/brunodavidgallerypublications).

The gallery was first established by Bruno David in New York City (1983) and later in Saint Louis (2005)

Images: **Shane Simmons**: *Telescopic 3*, (detail) 2014. Acrylic on panel, 48 x 48 inches. **Shawn Burkard**: *Formations 1*, 2013. Acrylic on paper, 6 x 4 inches. **Heather Bennett**: *Rivington*, 2010. Still from video, 35 minutes with sound, edition of 10. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.