

HEAT

Touchstone Gallery Member Show
June 30 - July 31, 2022

July is known as the dog days of summer, and if there's one thing D.C. residents know, it's heat. With high temperatures and humidity levels, summer may take you to the beach or wherever with the air conditioning. Just as we respond to the D.C. heat in different ways, artists have treated the subject of heat differently throughout history.

Heat as Allegory: Harvest and Hell

Renaissance painters across 16th Century Europe depicted summer heat as a time of bounty. Harvests, collections of crops, or even the Goddess of the harvest, Demeter, reminded viewers of the gifts that came with hard work, and the power of the seasons over humans. Simultaneously, artists such as Hieronymus Bosch visualized the fiery heat of damnation, a consequence of a life of sin and folly. Centuries later, Edvard Munch also depicted heat similarly in *Self-Portrait in Hell* (pictured right).



Edvard Munch, *Self-Portrait in Hell*, 1903



Berthe Morisot, *Summer's Day*, 1879

Heat as Location: Summer Landscapes

18th and 19th century French artists showed the beauty of summer heat in their landscape paintings. Impressionists such as Claud Monet and Berthe Morisot focused on outdoor scenes to show the effects of natural sunlight, while Post-Impressionists such as Henri Matisse spent their summers in Southern France, as a way to escape the heat and find artistic inspiration in their surroundings. This same tendency was common during the 20th century in the desert terrain of the American West.

Heat as Method: Creating Art

We can also think of heat as an artistic process. High temperatures create pottery, clay, and metal works—a phenomenon dating back to Porcelain production in the ancient Chinese empire. Thousands of years later, there are countless artists who have used heat to shape their works; actively or passively. Richard Serra used molten metal for sculptures, and in *Fluids* (pictured right), artist Allan Kaprow built structures out of ice blocks with the intent of them melting away in the California sun.



Allan Kaprow, *Fluids*, 1967



Derrick Adams, *Floater 80 (Self-Portrait)*, 2018

Take the Heat: Climate Change and Politics

Heat takes on a more serious meaning when looking at the frequency of contemporary art that visualizes or comments on climate change. In the 2018 exhibition *Indicators*, 17 artists created works for an outdoor museum in New York to address the effects of climate change. For example, Mary Mattingly planted tropical fruit trees in the park to show how rising temperatures will fundamentally alter climates. Contemporary artists also use heat to discuss political accountability and change, such as painter Derrick Adams' Buoyant exhibit, a collection of Black joy at a pool party. But to Adams, it isn't as simple as a summer celebration, for Black leisure itself can be radical, or even the time to plan a revolution.



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Included Works

(denoted with a 🔥 label)

David Alfuth *Cabinet of Curiosities #17*

Linda Bankerd *White Cap*

Valerie Bernat *Once Upon A Time We Went To The Moon*

Jill Brantley *Spa Day*

Marcia Coppel *Just Say Cheese*

Elaine Florimonte *The Opposite Side I, The Opposite Side II*

Chris Tucker Haggerty *I Will Survive*

Mary Lagnaoui *Desert Temples*

Teresa Roberts Logan *Sun Kissed*

Rosemary Lockett *Daydreaming in the Garden*

Sharon Malley *Mindscape I*

Sonya Michel *Before...and after*

Mary D. Ott *The Elm Tree*

Amy Sabrin *Reflections on the Shower Glass (or Self-Portrait with I-pad)*

Janathel Shaw *Here to Stay*

Maureen Squires *Nebula Series XII, The Butterfly Nebula*

Gale Wallar *Aletsch Glacier, Switzerland*

Steve Wanna *Myths of Creation - CE191111.1914*

Patricia Williams *Wildfire I, Wildfire II, Wildfire III*