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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 23, 2008

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TRANSFORMER is very pleased to present our fifth installment of *The Exercises*, a unique peer and mentorship program for emerging artists:

E5: RANGEFINDER July 2 – August 2, 2008

ARTIST TALK: June 28, 2008, 4pm

OPENING RECEPTION: June 28, 2008, 5-7pm

E5: R A N G E F I N D E R



Featuring new works by **Kristina Bilonick, Michael Matason, Jillian Pichocki, and Bryan Whitson**, this year's Exercises program highlights experimental uses of photography. *E5: Rangefinder* presents works created through a variety of photographic processes including screen printing, light painting, multiple exposure Polaroid's, and photographic renderings, which these artists developed over a several month process of peer critique and mentorship organized by Transformer and guest curator **Lisa McCarty**.

Launched in March 2004, **The Exercises for Emerging Artists** was created to support artists at critical points or crossroads in their professional growth and development. Consisting of a series of gatherings at Transformer, the program is designed to stimulate and encourage participating artists as they create new work. In addition to several peer critique sessions, the artists receive mentorship and feedback from area gallerists, more established artists, professors, and curators. This year's mentors included visual artist Jason Zimmerman, photographer Frank Day, Transformer's Executive & Artistic Director Victoria Reis, curator, art critic, and the Corcoran College of Art + Design's Administrative Chair of Photography Andy Grundberg, independent curator and gallerist Andrea Pollan of Curator's Office, and *E5: Rangefinder* guest curator Lisa McCarty.

Seeking to build this year's Exercises to include discipline specific leadership that would further benefit the participating artists' overall experience, Victoria Reis approached Lisa McCarty to guest curate the E5 program. Lisa McCarty, a visual artist, photographer, and independent curator states: "I am interested in the use of images as source material or a departure point within an artists' practice; images as ideas to build upon and fuse into a larger concept. Artists who work in this way also seem to be incorporating photographic processes into new techniques, or developing their own hybrid systems of image creation. For this program I sought to give a forum to these artist who approach the medium of photography as a means, but not always the end."

Beginning in April through to June 2008, the artists participated in facilitated bi-weekly meetings discussing the challenges they face as artists, the inspiration that helps propel them forward, as well as their artistic intentions and goals. *E5: Rangefinder* opens up the program, presenting the results of these artists' Exercises experience to the public for interaction and feedback.

Kristina Bilonick rarely employs a camera in her work, but instead uses basic ideas of light and exposure to make screen prints and photograms from family photos, pop iconography and treasured personal items. Inspired by the way various imagery streams through our minds, interchangeable with actual memories, Kristina developed a new work via the Exercises process entitled *Building Blocks*. In this series, Kristina applies her method of screen-printing to wooden blocks, developing a unique installation in the Transformer space. About this work Kristina states, "I present a 3-dimensional slideshow of personal memories from my early life. Each individual block represents an instance from my personal life, and as a whole arrangement, they reveal a personal history. The work is not displayed in a linear manner, but as a jumbled whole." Kristina Bilonick received her BA from the University of New Hampshire where she studied painting and printmaking. She returned to her native DC in 2000 and since then has been exhibiting both her fine art and commercial silkscreen pieces. In 2003,

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Kristina opened her own studio in the U-street area and was one of the founding members of Mid City Artists. Kristina has worked at Washington Very Special Arts, DC Arts Center and currently runs programs at Washington Project for the Arts.

Michael Matason's new portrait series depicting romantic couples reflects his interests in portraiture, perceptual theory, and psychology. About his work Michael states, "My work is inspired by the theory of indirect perception. This theory states that perception is driven by our own expectation of how the world should look. I attempt to apply this principle in a portrait setting in order to record my personal vision of the people I am closest to." To create these images Michael has developed a technique of light painting. Each portrait is an additive process where the subjects are posed in the dark until he "paints" them in with a singular light source – a flashlight. Shooting with a medium format camera and black and white film, Michael literally and figuratively illuminates his subjects for the viewer. When looking at these images one can't be sure whether the people depicted are encased by or emitting light. Michael Matason attended George Mason University in Fairfax, VA where he studied traditional photography and also received his BFA in Digital Arts. His work has been shown throughout the DC area including DC Arts Center, Warehouse Gallery, Target Gallery, and Black and White Gallery. He currently works at Gelardin New Media Center at Georgetown University in Washington D.C. and lives in Arlington.

For the last eight years, **Jillian Pichocki** has studied historical photographic practices ranging from Daguerreotypes to plastic cameras. Interested in what each individual process can express via its inherent idiosyncrasies, she is able to capture both haunting and blissful moments by exploiting what some might call flaws. For *E5: Rangefinder*, Jillian focused her investigations on a broken SX-70 Polaroid camera. She uses modified 600 film, and calls the resulting series *Threads of Light*. About her work, Jillian states, "Working with close friends as subjects in candid environments, I captured moments that were of mutual curiosity given the unpredictable nature of the medium. Not all pictures would double expose and often the light leaks became more evident than the person, but the combination of both is what sews them together." Jillian Pichocki was born in Philadelphia, PA. She received an MFA in Art and Visual Technology, with an emphasis in photography, from George Mason University in 2007. Her work has also been shown throughout the DC area including Touchstone Gallery, the Fraser Gallery, and Ellipse Art Center. This year Jillian was awarded best in show in the 2008 Bethesda International Photography Competition. She currently resides in Northern Virginia.

Influenced by his upbringing in the mid-west, **Bryan Whitson** states that he has a, "fascination with large open spaces as well as a sense of scene rather than specific singular subjects." Thus his images have never been about a place so much as a reflection of how he felt in that place. Bryan has consistently been drawn to shoot land, sky, and water, focusing on the world at a very elemental level, yet able to instill a mood of cool contemplation in the most minimal of subjects. He achieves this meditative state by applying simple but deliberate distortions to his images. Bryan pushes this idea further in his new series. About his work Bryan states, "While experimenting with ways to make the emotional response stronger through muting the inherent 'of somethingness' of a photograph into abstraction, I began using the computer to build images. Using multiple programs, as well as my memories and personal experiences, but no film or camera, has lead to this new series of constructed landscapes." Bryan Whitson was born in San Diego, but grew up in St. Louis, which he calls home. He received his BFA from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 1999 and his MFA from the University of Connecticut in 2001. He moved to Washington, DC in the summer of that same year and continues to live and work here. Bryan has exhibited his work at various galleries in DC, including Transformer, H & F Fine Art, Flashpoint Gallery, and Adamson Gallery.

EXHIBITION HOURS for E5: Rangefinder are Wednesday – Saturday, 1–7pm & by appointment

Images (left to right): Bryan Whitson, Kristina Bilonik, Michael Matason, Jillian Pichocki

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