



NEWS RELEASE

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EVERYDAY PERFECTION AT ALBANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT GALLERY

Albany, NY (March 21, 2019) - - - The Albany International Airport Gallery will present *Everyday Perfection*, an exhibition in which traditions of Shaker textile production can be seen to echo in works by eight contemporary artists. On view from March 23-September 2, 2019, the exhibition features historic artifacts from the collections of Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon and Shaker Heritage Society. A public reception will be held on Friday, April 12, from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. in the Albany International Airport Gallery, which is on the third floor of the main terminal before the Security Checkpoint.

The relationship to labor as a devotional process is common to both Shakers and artists of many disciplines. Shakers sought nearness to divine spirit through work that was necessary, relentless, and achieved through concentrated effort. Among artists, labor also serves a transcendent purpose - the production of objects and experiences that reflect and expand upon human perception. Through this exhibition, we can observe how the mechanics and motifs of Shaker textile production have seeded the creative pathways of artists today.

Artists Amie Cugat, Kate Hamilton, Elana Herzog, Brece Honeycutt, Laura Kaufman, Matt LaFleur and Melissa Thorne were invited to contribute to the exhibition through a wide range of media – from sculptures and site-specific installations, to drawings and mixed media works on paper. The artist Marietta Hoferer is also featured, courtesy of the collection of the University Art Museum, University at Albany. The artists’ engagement with the devotional labors of the Shakers is apparent throughout the exhibition, and brings new interpretation to the culturally significant legacy of the Shakers and the institutions that preserve their history.

“This exhibition developed through a dialogue between Shaker historians and artists that revealed just how influential the Shakers continue to be today,” said Kathy Greenwood, exhibit curator and director of the Art & Culture Program. “Shaker culture is embedded in the trajectory of the Airport itself, which was built upon the early Watervliet Shaker settlement. Its history is very much our own.”

Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon and the Shaker Heritage Society made vital contributions to this exhibition from its inception through consultation, research opportunities granted to the selected artists, and the generous loan of historic artifacts such as garment patterns, tailoring and sewing tools, baskets, a spinning wheel, yarn swift and loom. Through these objects, visitors to the exhibition will glimpse the finely wrought hand-made world that the Shakers occupied - one that seems far distant from the automated, digital world we inhabit today.

Among the contemporary visual artwork presented will be an installation by **Elana Herzog** composed of a selection of her recent *Sampler* woven structures interspersed with areas of dense stapling that suggest marks of stitching, or the material memory of an artifact that has nearly disintegrated. **Amie Cunat's** immersive installation is a fantastical interior sculpted of paper and cardboard that vibrates with saturated colors derived from the painted accents of Shaker decor. **Matt LaFleur's** sculpture, *Let Us Labor*, is a 6-foot diameter, saw-toothed disc whose rich colors and floor placement echo the knit rugs ubiquitous among the Shakers. In the center of the disc sits an upright stump, upon which the artist split the wood he burns in the Shaker-style stove that heats his studio. **Kate Hamilton's** luminous *Humble Monument* hangs in the stairwell at the entrance to the Gallery. The artist based this 10-foot sculpture upon an actual bonnet in the collection of the Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon. **Brece Honeycutt** likewise delved into Mount Lebanon's collection in order to research and produce her installation, *spooled*, in which vintage tools of textile production coexist with complex assemblies of stitched, dyed and layered cloth that have a history of domestic use. **Laura Kaufman's** woven industrial felt sculptures give bold physicality to the structure of the weave itself and the meaty form it can produce. Their relationship to a pair of nearby large Shaker baskets reinforces the notion of a woven vessel as serious business. The complex repetition of basket patterns also spurred the development of a new series of drawings presented here by **Melissa Thorne**. A signature work by **Marietta Hoferer** appears courtesy of the University Art Museum, University at Albany. Hoferer's geometric composition in strapping tape and graphite is both breathtaking and barely-there, recalling the prized array of white-on-white traditions in textile production.

THE SHAKER EXPERIENCE CONTINUES FOR TRAVELERS

Concourse-A Gallery features *A Promising Venture*, photographs from the collection of Hancock Shaker Village through July, 2019. This exhibition, located beyond the Security Checkpoint, consists of 75 Works Progress Administration photographs that document the Shaker communities in our region. The Works Progress Administration was initiated by the US government during the Great Depression of the 1930's to provide work-relief jobs for Americans. One of its programs, the Federal Art Project, yielded the Index of American Design, which operated between 1935 and 1942 and served to document and preserve our national artistic heritage.

Photographer Noel Vicentini, along with his assistant George Herlick were just two of the many artists sent to document the Shakers during the summer of 1936. His images captured the Shaker villages in our region during a time of decline; the austere settings mostly unpopulated, save for a few aging sisters. The photographs that Vicentini took helped to fulfill the need of a country that was searching for a national design aesthetic. His images stand on their own as works of fine art - beautiful scenes of form and design - yet they also tell us about Shaker history and culture during a time of great change.

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THE ALBANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S ART & CULTURE PROGRAM

Since 1998, the Albany International Airport's Art & Culture Program has sought to showcase the cultural vitality of New York's Capital Region through exhibitions and installations throughout the Airport's terminal. Such presentations enhance the art & experience of airport travelers and foster the advancement of a thriving creative community. The Art & Culture Program has become a cornerstone for demonstrating the breadth and quality of the arts throughout the Region as well as a resource for learning about local culture. Through exhibitions presented in the Albany International Airport Gallery and the Concourse Galleries, the Exhibition Case Program, free public programs and group tours, the Art & Culture Program has extended the reach of area artists and museums to an audience of more than 3 million people each year. Additionally, DEPARTURE, The Shop of Capital Region Museums - the retail arm of the Program - has become an important community service and a unique shopping venue lauded nationally and prized locally.