

# RONWA

## ART PROJECTS

### Michèle Colburn

Born:  
Washington DC, USA

Michèle Colburn's practice revolves around themes of violence. Her paintings, sculptures, and installations transform materials of war into mechanisms of political and social critique. These materials, which she combines with traditional art-making mediums, are fraught with violent associations. Colburn aims to create an aesthetically seductive viewing experience to provoke curiosity and reflection.

Manipulating deadly armaments echoes Colburn's biography as a lifelong peace activist. Transforming these materials is a process that renders them impotent. Her gunpowder paintings began as meditations on past wars and have evolved into reflections of current events. Combining wet gunpowder grounds with liquid acrylics and brilliant watercolors, she creates chaotic abstract landscapes that reflect the contemporary moment.

### Education

2012 American University, MFA Studio Art  
2004 American University, GCAT Teacher Certification  
1976 Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA. B.A. Art History

### Solo Exhibitions

2022 Material Transformations, International Peace Museum, Dayton, Ohio  
2021 In Plain Sight, Ronewa Art Projects, Berlin, Germany  
2018 Michèle Colburn: The More Things Change, MOCA Arlington, Arlington, Virginia  
2015 Michele Colburn: Wired, MOCA Arlington, Arlington, Virginia  
Michele Colburn: War Paths, Charles Krause Reporting Fine Art, Washington, DC

### Honors and Awards

2023 Performance/Event Grant, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Washington DC  
2022 Exhibition Grant, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Washington, DC  
2020 Artist Grant, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Washington, DC  
2015 Visual Artist Grant, The Puffin Foundation, Teaneck, New Jersey  
2014 Partial Fellowship to Vermont Studio Center, April  
2013 Artist Residency, School of Visual Arts, New York  
2012 Mellon Conference Travel Grant  
2010-12 Teaching Fellowship, American University  
2011-12 Ted & Elizabeth Leon Art Scholarship, American University

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### Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2023 Collector's Night Exhibition, Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, DC
- 2022 Fragile Beauty, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Washington, DC  
Collector's Night Exhibition, Project for the Arts, Washington, DC
- 2020/21 Darkest Before Dawn: Art in a Time of Uncertainty. Ethan Cohen KUBE, Beacon, NY
- 2020 Conversations 2020. The Puffin Foundation Cultural Center, Teaneck, NJ.
- 2019 50 Years: A Celebration of F&M's Alumnae Artists, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA  
Protection exhibition of Play, Protection, Peril, H-space. Zenith Community Arts Foundation, Washington, DC  
Convergence, MOCA Arlington, Arlington, VA
- 2018 Defining the Art of Change in the Age of Trump, Center for Contemporary Political Art, Washington, DC  
Art Speaks!, Arena Gallery, Women's Caucus for Art, Los Angeles
- 2017 Fight or Flight, The Painting Center, New York, NY  
Project Space, Phoenix Gallery, New York, NY  
Reasoned Likelihood, Grizzly Grizzly, Philadelphia, PA
- 2015 Visaural: Sight, Sound, and Action, Nave Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2014 Readymade@100, Katzen Art Museum, American University, Washington, DC,  
Curator Mark Cameron Boyd  
Americana, 39th Street Gallery, Brentwood Arts Exchange, Hyattsville, MD
- 2013 Fear Strikes Back, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA  
Fear Strikes Back, DC Arts Space, Washington, DC. Curator Helen Frederick  
The Newtown Project, Charles Krause/Reporting Fine Art, Washington, DC  
Alumni Exhibition, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA
- 2012 Untitled 3, Randal Scott Projects, Washington, DC  
On Loan, Area 405, Baltimore, MD, Juror: Sarah Tanguy, Independent Curator  
Nine Degrees, Graduate Thesis Exhibition, April/May, American University, Washington, DC  
Momentum (Exhibition honoring the 40th Anniversary of the Woman's Caucus for Art), Gallery 825, Los Angeles, CA, Juror: Rita Gonzalez, Associate Curator, Contemporary Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art
- 2011 MFA Thesis Show, Katzen Museum, American University, Washington, DC  
Hillyer Art Space, Washington, DC, Juror: Sculptor Barbara Liotta
- 2007 Small Rays of Hope: Fragments of a Larger Idea, Rhonda Schaller Gallery, New York, NY

### Collections

Barlow-Gilotty Collection, Washington, DC

International Peace Museum, Dayton, Ohio

National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

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### **Lectures, Panels, Presentations and Collaborations**

- 2019 Panelist, Franklin & Marshall College, in conjunction with 50 years exhibition  
Panelist, DC Arts and Humanities, Individual Artist Grants
- 2018 Panelist, You, If No One Else Panel Discussion, MOCA Arlington
- 2015 Artist Talk, MOCA Arlington in conjunction with Wired exhibition
- 2013 Artist Panelist, Fear Strikes Back, DC Arts Center
- 2011 Artist Presenter, Under the Influence, group presentations organized by the WPA and hosted at the Corcoran. Juror, artist John Bankston

### **Artist residencies**

- 2023 ACI Residency, Umbria, Italy
- 2018 Muong Residency, Hoa Binh, Vietnam
- 2014 School of Visual Arts, New York, Ny
- 2013 Vermont Studio Center, Fellowship
- 2013-19 MOCA Arlington, Resident Artist

### **Professional**

- 2018 Adjunct Lecturer, Marymount University and American University 2018
- 2010-12 Teaching Assistant – American University, Painting, Level 200 and The Studio Experience
- 2010-11 Art Instructor - Arlington Arts Center.
- 2016-->  
present
- 2008-10 Embassy of Switzerland, Washington, DC. Manager, Cultural Projects,  
Communications and Cultural Section,
- 2007-08 Kreeger, and National Museum of Women in the Arts
- 2006-07 Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO. Marketing Survey Interviewer
- 1997-01 Teaching Artist – Adult and children's workshop for the Hirshhorn
- 1991-01 Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Public Affairs Specialist, Smithsonian Institution,

### **Published written work**

- 2011 Guiermo Kuitca: An Artist's Quiet Take on Mass Murder  
Artifice: Fear and Loathing in Washington, DC  
Winter/Spring art reviews

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### **Publications, Press and Reviews**

WAMU Radio, Washington, DC. The Kojo Nnamdi Show: A D.C. Exhibit is using Gun Violence To Inspire Jarring Artwork. August 13, 2019

[https://wamu.org/story/19/08/13/a-d-c-exhibit-is-using-gun-violence-to-inspire-jarring-artwork/?fbclid=IwAR13-nsGuJffBMPOK0h\\_HF\\_pNzjgSz\\_i6Fee-GVs5i-8jWr0z7bU-4i7GPK](https://wamu.org/story/19/08/13/a-d-c-exhibit-is-using-gun-violence-to-inspire-jarring-artwork/?fbclid=IwAR13-nsGuJffBMPOK0h_HF_pNzjgSz_i6Fee-GVs5i-8jWr0z7bU-4i7GPK)

Ruminate Magazine, literature and visual arts publication, Consume, Summer Issue, 2019  
Fight or Flight, The Painting Center, New York, NY. 2017. <https://www.thepaintingcenter.org/fight-or-flight/>

In the Galleries: Gunpowder and Teddy Bears reviewed by Mark Jenkins, 2015. The Washington Post. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/in-the-galleries-gunpowder-and-teddy-bears/2015/07/23/a6bc67b6-2fb8-11e5-8353-1215475949f4\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.27c3f271476d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/in-the-galleries-gunpowder-and-teddy-bears/2015/07/23/a6bc67b6-2fb8-11e5-8353-1215475949f4_story.html?utm_term=.27c3f271476d)

Fear Strikes Back, reviewed by Mark Jenkins. May 30, 2013. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/alchemical-vessels-offers-bowls-full-of-healing/2013/05/30/96beedcc-c898-11e2-9f1a-1a7cdee20287\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/alchemical-vessels-offers-bowls-full-of-healing/2013/05/30/96beedcc-c898-11e2-9f1a-1a7cdee20287_story.html)

Artists Contribute to 'Newtown Project: A Call to Arms!', Mark Jenkins. The Washington Post, January 24, 2012. <http://www.charleskrausereporting.com/>

Exhibition of Art Inspired by the Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting Opens in DC, January 25, 2012. [://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/2013/01/25/exhibition-of-art-inspired-by-the-sandy-hook-elementary-shooting-opens-in-d-c/](http://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/2013/01/25/exhibition-of-art-inspired-by-the-sandy-hook-elementary-shooting-opens-in-d-c/)

Postal7600, (Argentinian art publication) Septiembre/octubre, 2012. p 38

Nine Degrees: MFA Thesis Exhibition, Introduction "Ideas, Identity, Communication, Community," Jamie L. Smith, Founding Partner Conner Contemporary. Michele Colburn, p.5, 2012

Momentum: 40th Anniversary of the Women's Caucus for Art catalogue. pp. 39-40. 2012

AmLit, Spring 2012 edition. Student Literary Magazine, American University. pp. 21 & 76

Liberal Art: Science, Nature and Philosophy Help Fuel the Passion of Five Alumni Artists, Franklin 7 Marshall Magazine, Jan. 2008. Vol 52.

1460 Wall Mountables, DCist.com (July); Art with Heart, The Washington Examiner, August, 25 and 26, 2007

The Torch, Smithsonian Employee Newspaper, 2004  
Smithsonian Magazine, Staff Artists, p.102. 1996