

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WATER IN THE GAS

On view at The Kreeger Museum June 7th, 2025 - August 23rd, 2025



Misha Ilin. *ratking*, 2025. Ceramics and enamel. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Washington, DC: The Kreeger Museum and Hamiltonian Artists are pleased to present *WATER IN THE GAS*, an exhibition featuring the work of 2022-2024 Hamiltonian alumni Misha Ilin, Madyha J. Leghari, Edgar Reyes, and Isabella Whitfield.

The title for the exhibition comes from Jean Dubuffet's 1961 painting, *Water In The Gas* (L'eau dans le gaz), which lives in The Kreeger Museum's permanent collection. It is said that the French phrase can be traced back to the early 20th century, when households used coal gas for electricity. High concentrations of water vapor would create obstructions in the pipes, resulting in pressure and creating small explosions. The expression is used when tension is rising in the atmosphere, or an argument is brewing.

In the same vein, this exhibition calls us to consider the ways in which socio-political pressures give rise to generational implications. *WATER IN THE GAS* places artists living and working in what is widely considered to be an unprecedented moment in US history, in conversation with artists whose lives and careers were impacted by some of the most defining power struggles of the 20th century.



Situated in the tumultuous geopolitical climate of 1934-1965, selected works from The Kreeger Museum's permanent collection reflect themes of citizenship, censorship, industry, labor, and sovereignty. The paintings and sculpture range from Josef Albers' geometric abstraction, to Max Beckmann's representational work of children playing. Other featured artists include Fernand Léger, Joan Mitchell, David Park, and David Smith.

Drawing upon current events and rising temperatures in the United States' socio-political climate, Hamiltonian alumni point to what might be left behind for generations Z and Alpha—from fenced borders, radioactive rays, and class disparity to four-leaf clovers, indigenous relics, and obstetric illustrations etched in salt stone. Their contributed works move across sculpture, photo, textile, and installation.

This exhibition is curated by Anisa Olufemi, Director of Programs and Curator at Hamiltonian Artists, and presented under The Collaborative, a program developed by The Kreeger Museum in 2021 to support Washington-area artists.

About The Collaborative

"We are thrilled to be in partnership with arts organizations across the city to present work of contemporary Washington-area artists. The Collaborative furthers our mission by supporting and spotlighting the immense talent of visual and performing artists in our city."— Helen Chason, Director

About Hamiltonian Artists

Hamiltonian Artists' mission is to nurture community and increase access to space, opportunity, and resources for emerging artists, through impactful programs and exhibitions. The organization reaffirms and expands upon its originating vision as an incubator for the professional development of emerging visual artists, serving as a hub for Washington, DC's, creative economy and a vibrant center for contemporary art in the DC area. With its unique investment in emerging artists, Hamiltonian Artists provides resources to aid their development in important business skills, professional experiences, and visibility to support and sustain their art career.

Through the fellowship program, exhibitions, studios, artist talks, public events, membership program for art collectors at all levels, and so much more, the organization contributes to the vitality of the area's arts scene by deepening the appreciation for contemporary art and culture throughout Washington, DC, and beyond.



About The Kreeger Museum

One of the greatest legacies of David and Carmen Kreeger is the Museum that bears their name. In 1959, the Kreegers began to amass a formidable collection of modern art. For the next fifteen years they assembled most of the Museum's holdings. The collection reflects the spirit of David and Carmen Kreeger who agreed on every piece they purchased—their approach to collecting was a personal one—they bought what they loved. The Kreeger's focus on 19th and 20th century paintings is evidenced by works by Monet, Picasso, Braque, Stella, Mitchell, and Frankenthaler, among others. Also included in the permanent collection are works by prominent Washington artists, including William Christenberry, Gene Davis, Sam Gilliam, Simmie Knox, and Paul Reed. Outstanding examples of African and Asian art are integrated in gallery spaces on both levels. Designed in 1963 by Philip Johnson and Richard Foster, the building sits on five acres and is surrounded by gardens and terraces filled with sculpture.

HOW TO VISIT

The exhibition is on view at The Kreeger Museum, 2401 Foxhall Road NW, Washington DC, 20007. Gallery hours are Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–4 pm. For more information, visit kreegermuseum.org or hamiltonianartists.org.

CONTACT

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Images available [here](#).