

t r a n s f o r m e r

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The Most Lamentable Comedy
GW Corcoran School of the Arts and Design
Rotunda Gallery at The Flagg Building
December 3 - December 10, 2022



Opening Event:
Saturday, December 3, 2022, 1 – 4 PM

Washington, DC: As part of Transformer's 20th Anniversary Retrospective Exhibition, *Transformer20*, on view at the GW Corcoran School of the Arts & Design through December 10, Transformer - in collaboration with guest curators Rex Delafkaran and Nancy Daly, co-directors of the artist-run business *but, also* - are pleased to present *The Most Lamentable Comedy*: a series of exhibitions within an exhibition, within an exhibition. Featuring more than 400 artworks from Transformer's FlatFile Program, this pop-up exhibition will commence on December 3rd from 1-4 pm with six back-to-back opening receptions for the exhibitions within the exhibition within *Transformer20*.

Taking place in the Rotunda Gallery of the GW Corcoran School of the Arts & Design historic Flagg Building, the six exhibitions within *The Most Lamentable Comedy* will feature *but, also* guest curated selections of small to medium scale works by each of the 75 artists from Transformer's *FlatFile* program. *The Most Lamentable Comedy* exhibitions and their openings will all take place as part of a celebratory winter holiday event from 1- 4pm on December 3rd with sweet treats & beverages. All artworks will be available for purchase, with 70% of all art sales going directly to the artists. *The Most Lamentable Comedy* will be on view through December 10, 2022.

The exhibition's namesake is derived from *The Most Lamentable Comedy* and *Most Cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisbe* a play within the play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In this play within a play, Shakespeare parodies his main characters' mishaps and encounters in love. *but, also* co-directors Daly and Delafkaran invoke this parody as a means to describe the performance of being an artist, and the comically inept romance between an artist and 'success':

"In *but, also's* first year, we produced six exhibitions with 120 artists, setting our pace. In order to improve that pace and stay relevant in this, our second year, we must complete six new shows by the end of the year. With little time left, these six shows must be both simultaneous and distinct. Both an ode to and critique of the sometimes perilous journey of 'keeping up' in an industry that is both job and passion, our performance of six openings draws attention to the competitive productivity embedded in the art world industry and the inherent shortcomings that result from doing too much."

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Combing through the diverse Transformer *FlatFile* archive, the breadth of work opens the door for investigations: rich dialogues between these artworks emerge. The six exhibitions within *The Most Lamentable Comedy* are each curated around overarching throughlines found within the artists' work broadly, including: systems of power, landscape, the body, memory, materiality and interpersonal relationships. Presented within a single space, the six exhibitions are woven together so that the installation encourages visitors to both understand *but, also's* curatorial vision, while simultaneously making their own connections across shows.

"Transformer's mission is rooted in collaboration. Throughout our 20 year history, Transformer has facilitated a broad range of collaborations with artists, emerging curators & arts organizers, artist co-ops, collectives, artist-run businesses and emerging arts initiatives through a variety of temporal projects to embrace and foster inventiveness and collegiality in support of artistic experimentation. We are thrilled to collaborate with *but, also* as part of our *Transformer20* retrospective exhibition and anniversary celebrations, highlighting their distinct and robust approach to arts organizing." - Victoria Reis, Founder/Director, Transformer.

The Most Lamentable Comedy Exhibitions Hours: Wed - Sat, 1 - 5pm through December 10, 2022

Image credit: *but, also*

t r a n s f o r m e r is a Washington, DC based 501 (c) 3 artist-centered, non-profit visual arts organization. Founded in June 2002 by artists & arts organizers, Transformer provides a consistent, supportive, and professional platform for emerging artists to explore and present experimental artistic concepts, build audiences for their work, and advance their careers. A catalyst and advocate for contemporary artists and emergent expression in the visual arts, Transformer connects and promotes emerging visual artists within regional, national and international contexts through innovative exhibition and programs partnerships with a broad & diverse range of individual and organizational partners.

t r a n s f o r m e r ' s 2022/23 Exhibition Series and programs are supported by: The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Corcoran Women's Committee, The CrossCurrents Foundation, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, The Sachiko Kuno Foundation, The National Endowment for the Visual Arts, Truist Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Transformer's Board and Advisory Council, and The Visionary Leaders Circle – a growing group of individual donors & corporate sponsors. *Transformer20* is additionally supported by The Corcoran School of the Arts and Design at the George Washington University and the Corcoran Women's Committee.

but, also is dedicated to the sustaining of art practices, in a multitude of forms, through a series of short-term projects. Through open calls, exhibitions, storefront installations, online promotion, documentation, discussion, and direct sales, the mission of *but, also* is to support all the aspects of an artistic practice that surround the making of art. For more information, please visit our website but-also.com.