

ROSEMARY FEIT COVEY

THE 0 PROJECT



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**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS/CONTRIBUTORS
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THE O PROJECT IN ARLINGTON



INTRODUCTION

Once a year, the AAC reviews applications for solo exhibitions to take place in the following year. In the summer of 2006, roughly 250 individuals from around the Mid-Atlantic submitted images, artists' statements, and exhibition proposals. Media ranged from drawings and paintings to video and large-scale installation. Each application was carefully reviewed by members of AAC staff and Board, and by outside arts professionals Phyllis Rosenzweig, formerly of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and Carole Garmon, an independent curator and professor at University of Mary Washington.

The entire review process takes two full days, and sitting in a darkened room for that long can lead to a sort of exhaustion. A really intriguing idea can wake up the entire panel and get creative thoughts flowing. Such was the case with Rosemary Covey's application.

Most of Covey's application focused on her exquisite wood engravings, the medium for which she is best known and for which she has been recognized internationally. While the panel was quite interested in the powerful messages of the engravings, it was her discussion of

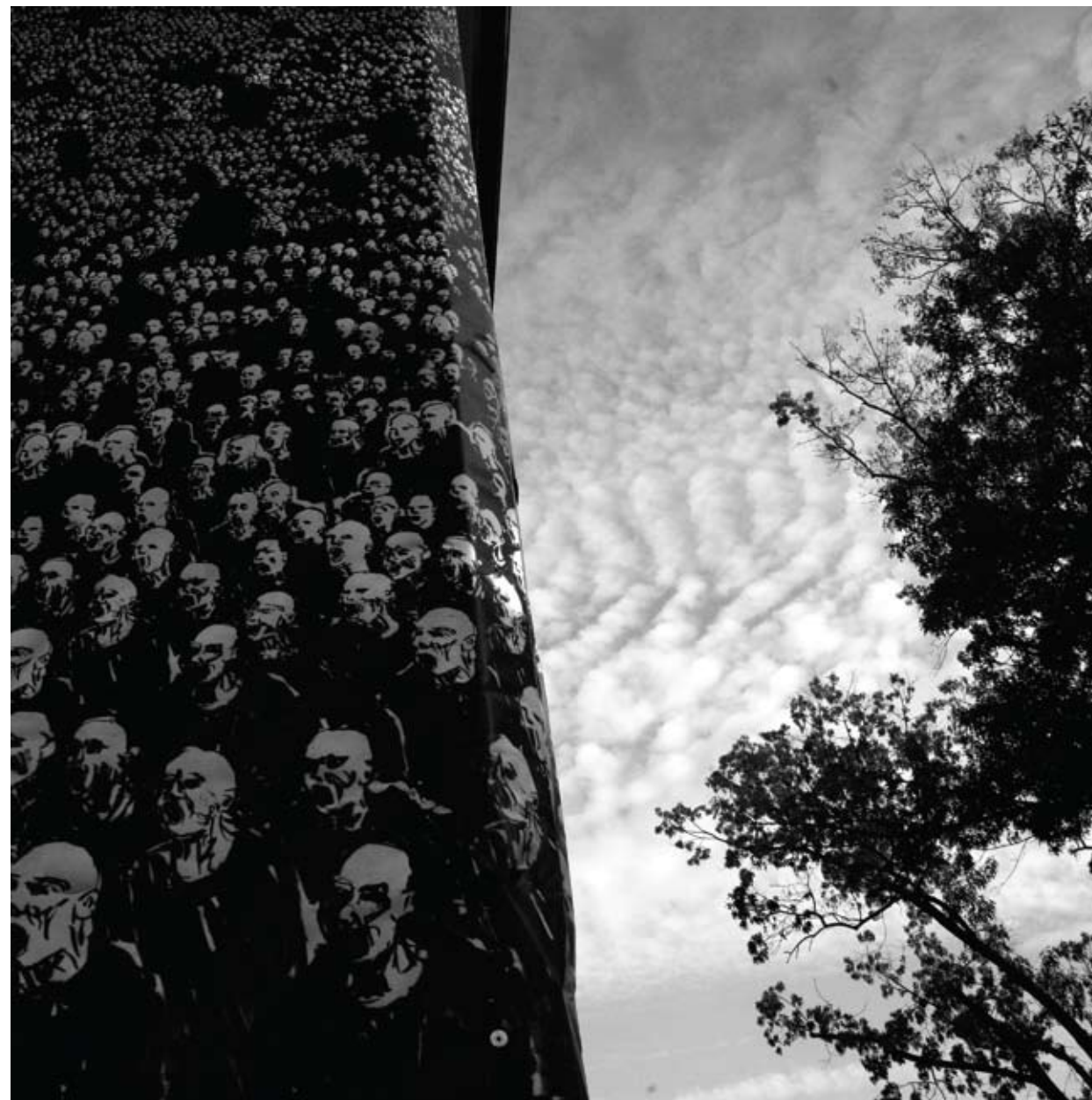
a repeatedly photocopied drawing that caught our attention most dramatically. "0", as her proposal described, played with the very definition of fine art print since the image could be reproduced on any scale, repeated not only by trained artists, but by anyone with access to a photocopy machine. In fact, she remarked, it could be printed on Tyvek® and could wrap a building. The notion of wrapping the building with "0" immediately caught everyone's attention. What an interesting twist on the idea that art should be accessible to everyone. With *The 0 Project*, this accessibility would be two-fold, using both commercial modes of reproduction and unavoidable, large-scale public viewing. Covey was selected as an artist for Fall 2007's Sculpture on the Grounds.

As the project grew, it became not only a statement about the nature of printmaking, but about free speech and the need to make this fundamental human right likewise accessible to all. The wrapping became the cornerstone of a much larger, multi-media, international project that aimed to give voice to the underrepresented and the traditionally ignored.

I am a subscriber to the theory that the arts have a unique ability to transcend political allegiances and instead foster dialogue among disparate groups. Where politicians and policy advocates must often stake their careers on being on the "correct" side of an issue, artists are not so beholden to a particular set of ideas. In fact, it is the wrestling with conflicting views, the overturning of paradigms, or the championing of the underserved that makes the arts such a crucial part of today's social landscape.

All of the arts can provide a forum for the exchange of ideas that in other arenas might engender vitriolic debate or—worse—stubborn close-mindedness. *The 0 Project* sought to provide such a platform on a public, grand scale. The Arlington Arts Center was proud to support this project, and is extremely grateful to the financial and material sponsors of this undertaking.

Claire Huschle
Executive Director, Arlington Arts Center



HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

2005

The 0 Project art work was first conceived during an international artist residency at Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana, California. A section of the piece was exhibited in a solo exhibit at Grand Central.

2006

A section of the piece was exhibited at the National Juried Competition, Works of Art on Paper at Long Beach Institute of the Arts and Sciences, juried by Carter E. Foster, Curator of Drawings, Whitney Museum of American Art.

The 0 Project was selected from among hundreds of applicants in the mid-Atlantic region for the annual solo exhibition call for entries at the Arlington Arts Center.

2007

The 0 Project had its premiere as a large-scale outdoor sculptural piece at the Arlington Arts Center, located just minutes from and on a major thoroughfare leading to downtown Washington DC. Printed on DuPont™ Tyvek® banner media, it was – once installed – over 15 feet high and 300 feet long, wrapping the exterior perimeter of this historic converted school-house building. The opening in October

included a hundred masks printed on DuPont™ Tyvek® in a performance piece created by BosmaDance Company in collaboration with the artist. A “Speakers’ Corner,” lectures and workshops for children were hosted by the Arlington Arts Center as integral components of the project.

An exhibition was held concurrently in Toronto at Brayham Contemporary Art. *The 0* piece wrapped the interior of the gallery – floor to ceiling – and included prints and sculptural elements of the design mounted throughout and outside the gallery.

The 0 Project was part of the Burning Man Festival in the Nevada desert. The 0 image was an important feature in the “Abductor”, a large installation piece designed in Los Angeles and featuring an industrial club scene vibe.

The 0 Project projection was created as another option to viewing the art work. Using flash animation, the projection is designed for display on the exterior walls of buildings. The projection has also been used as a backdrop in rock concerts throughout Europe.

2008

The 0 Project continues to expand and spread via both high- and low-tech means its purposely ambiguous message being interpreted and re-shaped by individuals world-wide.

The 0 Project has appeared in feature articles in *Art in America*, the *Washington Post*, *Chemical and Engineering News*, *The Big Picture* magazine as well as many other publications and news programs.

The 0 Project Voices

Each project venue and *The 0 Project* website have books and space available for viewers to record concerns on issues they feel are not adequately addressed by mass media. These responses also provide opportunities for more personal reactions to the artwork.



ABOUT THE ARLINGTON ARTS CENTER

MISSION STATEMENT

The Arlington Arts Center (AAC) was founded in 1974 and is housed in the historic Maury School. It is a private, nonprofit contemporary arts center dedicated to supporting and presenting new work by artists in the Mid-Atlantic region. Through exhibitions, studio spaces and educational opportunities, the AAC serves as a bridge between artists and the public. Our goal is to foster an appreciation of and involvement in, the visual arts in Arlington County and the region.

EXHIBITION PROGRAM

The AAC is one of the largest venues for contemporary artists in the area, and has served as the launching pad for many successful artistic careers. Our exhibition program consists of group shows and solo exhibitions. The AAC issues an annual call for solo exhibition proposals for the subsequent Spring, Winter, and Fall seasons. Proposals are reviewed by a rotating Exhibitions Committee, which includes members of staff and Board as well as prestigious curators, artists and other arts professionals. Invitational exhibitions and juried group shows round out the exhibition calendar. The AAC continues to pursue artistic excellence

and to facilitate bringing emerging and under-represented artists into contact with the public as well as museum and gallery professionals. The AAC exhibitions program serves as a focal point for the ongoing exchange of ideas and images between artists and the public.

SCULPTURE ON THE GROUNDS

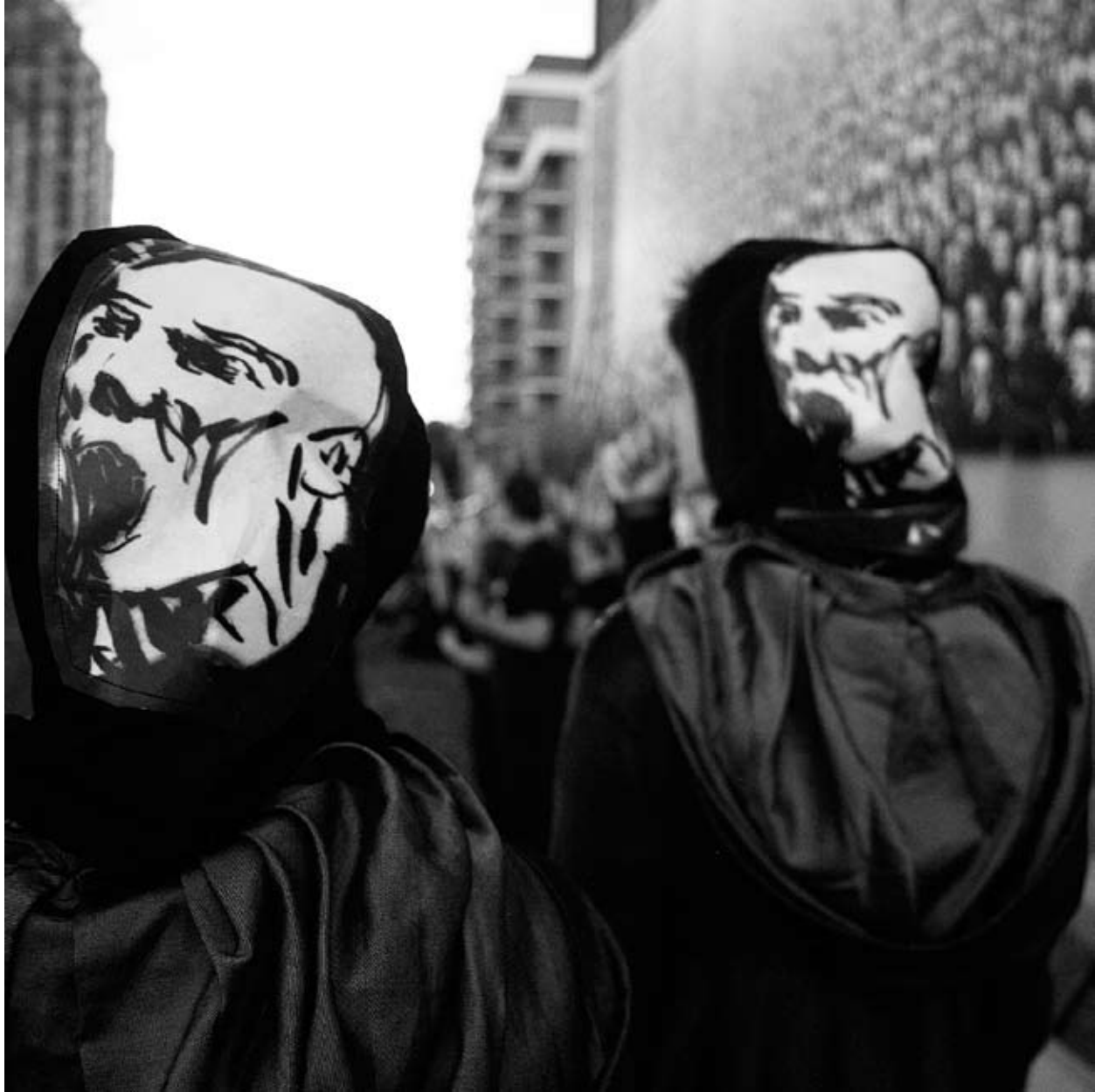
In October 2006, the AAC launched an ambitious outdoor sculpture series entitled Sculpture on the Grounds. Annually, two exhibitions feature the work of emerging and mid-career artists and serve to educate the public about current trends in today’s temporary outdoor sculpture. Sculpture on the Grounds is one of very few programs in the Washington, D.C. area dedicated to such work. As such, the exhibitions make an important contribution to the public art in the region.

The AAC hopes that Sculpture on the Grounds continues to present provoking questions about the nature of art making in contemporary society, as well as the role of outdoor sculpture in civic life.

THANKS and SPONSORS

The exhibitions and programs at the AAC are made possible through the generous support of the Virginia Commission for the Arts/NEA, the Arlington Commission for the Arts, The Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, MARPAT Foundation, Washington Forrest Foundation, Strategic Analysis, BB&T, Venable Foundation, the Arlington Community Foundation and our members and supporters. Generous in-kind support is provided by Arlington Catering.









This is a vision of what's raw, what's inchoate, what's undifferentiated. Rosemary turns in specificity for sameness. Well, that can be as scary and menacing and disturbing as anything else she has done. Surprise, surprise, it's perfect for large formats, huge formats, far bigger than anything she's presented before. At this scale of revelation, the mode of expression must be skillfully, hauntingly generalized.

The viewer's response: No powerful work of art leaves the viewer untouched or unchallenged. Wholeness hurts; it breaks down the flat planes of existence and makes them sharp; it stretches this way and goes deep that way. Art is not for art's sake; it seeks the ground in each of us, the place where we normally stand, and shakes it under us, renewing and expanding us, making us jump, grow nervous, become reflective.

I cannot speak for everyone's viewer response when it comes to the inscrutable O Project. I am very much not a man for crowds, but here I'm in one. Can I preserve my sense of irony? Can I hear anything I want to hear? Can I get out of this crowd? What do these massed, upturned faces mean? Are they sinister, without hope, wound up like so many expectant toy soldier pilgrims demanding that I give them an answer? I sense trouble percolating in this rhythmic generality. It gives me no refuge. Not a place I want to be, but definitely something I want to see.

O PROJECT VOICES

- Robert Earle