

## NEWS RELEASE

BRUNO DAVID GALLERY  
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### EXHIBITIONS FOR APRIL | MAY 2024

Exhibition Dates: April 12 – June 29, 2024  
Opening Reception: Friday, April 12, from 6 to 8 pm

**SHAWN BURKARD**  
*Under the Sun*

**JEAM MASON**  
*Resting, at Peace*

**DAMON FREED**  
*The Inner Chapters*

**VAN McELWEE**  
*INCARNATION*  
New Media Room

**JUDITH SHAW**  
*Lifelines*  
Window on Forsyth

(SAINT LOUIS, MO — March 20, 2024) — Bruno David Gallery is pleased to present five solo exhibitions by artists who have a strong studio practice. They include **Shawn Burkard**, a St. Louis-based artist; **Jean Mason**, a St. Louis-based photographer; **Damon Freed**, a Missouri-based painter; **Van McElwee**, a St. Louis-based video artist, and **Judith Shaw**, a St. Louis-based multi-disciplinary artist. These exhibitions highlight the diversity and vitality of the contemporary art scene in St. Louis and beyond.

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Bruno David presents *Under the Sun*, an exhibition of new paintings by **Shawn Burkard**. This is Burkard's fifth solo exhibition at Bruno David Gallery.

Color field paintings are a representation of our experience under the sun. In Shawn Burkard work, he utilizes digital colors that were later transformed into physical wood, resulting in a painting that beautifully captures the atmospheric essence of the sky and the light it produces. His fascination with the sun, sky, and screen color as a fluid, interchangeable trio led him to experiment with the idea of bringing digital color from the screen into the physical world to be experienced as pure visual sensations. Although his previous work often featured text writing over ombre color fade backgrounds, he decided to concentrate solely on color field abstraction and the



beauty of the sublime for this series. Using a circular composition that deviates from the traditional vertical rectangle view, he aimed to remove a sense of orientation and create a unique perspective that transports viewers into a world of vivid abstractions. In this series, he explores the magical qualities of light and color through intuitive processes based on chance, taking inspiration from his in-depth study of art history.

In concurrence with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.

Image: Shawn Burkard. *Untitled*, 2024. Acrylic ink on birch wood panel, 48 diameter inches  
More on Shawn Burkard at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/195-shawn-burkard/>

Bruno David presents *The Inner Chapters*, an exhibition of new paintings by **Damon Freed**. This is Freed's eleventh solo exhibition at Bruno David Gallery.

Damon Freed statement on *The Inner Chapters* paintings: "The paintings came into being after a long sojourn into the mind and heart of working nonobjectively, that is, after looking inward for a time and not to the world of things. Therefore, I feel that the paintings not only reflect these thoughts and states of being, but successfully represent a tradition of belief in painting as a discipline dedicated to such notions of philosophical, spiritual, and formal understanding. I want to be clear in my notes at this time that black is not hate, it is love, and grey is softness and purity.



Having revisited them, it was necessary that the paintings be finished similarly. The black areas were painted by using Flashe, a vinyl-based paint that also dries matte and is soluble in water. Now, years later it is widely heralded by painters of all kinds. Oil has a glossier satin sheen at times. The interior grey shapes were painted using thin layers of acrylic over an absorbent ground medium. And in terms of process and feeling I held onto this studio note written during the creation of the original eight paintings in 2006.

"I am going ahead with a series that, from what I can now tell (three paintings in), only changes with shape from piece to piece. Ground, brushwork, and color (black and grey) are constant. The surface is layered using similar repetitive strokes with the same size and style of brush. Each is made using equal amounts and values of black. Each painting is 6' x 6'.

What I am seeking is to realize my response to the work when all remains the same outside of the expression of shape. With each piece comes a different feeling, though I have not yet experienced them hanging as a group. I will name the series "The Inner Chapters"."

The Inner Chapters, the summary title for the works, is named after Chuang Tzu's writings which consist of seven inner chapters famous for their use of metaphor, parable, and anecdote. But I want to be clear that, to me, the paintings don't read this way through metaphor, parable, or anecdote. I am of the tradition of Abstract Expressionism. The paintings are a one-to-one encounter to me and are not valued through associations of this kind. In person, they are pure felt experience.

In concurrence with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.

Image: Damon Freed. *Inner Chapter VI-Freedom Cage*, 2007, Acrylic and Flashe on Canvas, 72 x 72 inches  
More on Damon Freed at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/47-damon-freed/>

Bruno David presents a series of photographs titled *"Resting, at Peace"*, by St. Louis-based photographer **Jean Mason**. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.



Jean Mason's photographic anthology in the exhibition, captures the quintessence of life—or rather, its absence. This poignant collection features images of lifeless nature that Mason encountered while meandering through the city of Clayton's suburban landscapes, ranging from insects and flora to small mammals. It beckons viewers to discern an often-ignored facet of life, prompting contemplation on the complexities of nature's presence within urban spaces. The exhibit aims to illuminate the profound emptiness that pervades contemporary settings.

Jean Mason, a native of St. Louis, was born in 1946 and has immersed himself in the art of photography for over 60 years. Mason's extensive experience with motion picture cameras primarily occurred in the late 60s and early 70s, where he focused on sports photography, significantly influencing the way sporting events are televised today. In concurrence with the exhibition, Bruno David Gallery will publish a catalogue of the artist's work with an in-depth exhibition history and bibliography.

Image: Jean Mason, *Untitled*, 2023. Archival ink on paper, 8 x 10 inches, edition of 10

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In the New Media room, Bruno David presents *INCARNATION*. A film by **Van McElwee**. This will be McElwee's sixth exhibition with the gallery. *INCARNATION* was presented as an installation at Instants Vidéo Festival in Marseille, France in November 2023, and premiered at *Van McElwee: Score in Variation Space* work at The Webster University Film Series.

David Finkelstein writes about *INCARNATION* in Lake Ivan Film Journal:

"What starts out as a fun social event ends up as a portal into a fantastic alternative world, a visual explosion of scintillating color and movement. The screen begins to resemble an animation of turning, shimmering, melting stained glass. The soundtrack of strange peeps and cries sounds something like birds and insects one would hear on a pleasant evening on some remote planet. It is in just these sorts of magical transformations that McElwee has perfected in his art."

Van McElwee received his MFA in Multimedia 1978 from Washington University School of Art and his BFA in Printmaking in 1973 from the Memphis College of Art. Selected installations and one-person shows include: Anthology Film Archives, New York; ARTpool in Budapest; The Shanghai Duolun Museum of Art, China; Galerie Trabant, Austria; Rencontres Video Art Plastique in France; Berkeley Museum of Art Pacific Film Archive, California; The Marsh Gallery at the



University of Richmond, Virginia; Medienwerkstatt in Vienna and Ohio University Gallery of Art. Selected group shows include: The National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Paula Cooper Gallery New York; The Long Beach Museum of Art; Ars Electronica, ZKM, Siggraph; Camden Arts Centre, London; Wexner Center for the Arts; Milwaukee Art Museum; Japan Media Arts Festival, Tokyo; ASIFA Austria, Museum Quartier, Vienna; Worldwide Video Festival at the Stedelijk Museum; The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago; Art in General, New York; Digital Dance Festival, Seoul, South Korea and Palais des Beaux Arts, Lille, France. His grants and awards include: A John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship; St. Louis Regional Arts Commission Artist Fellowship; The American Film Institute Independent Filmmaker Award and the National Endowment for the Arts Independent Production Fund (seven-time recipient) and a grant from the Government of India. McElwee's work is represented by The Kitchen, New York, Bruno David Gallery, St. Louis, Heure Exquise Center for Video Art, France, LUX, UK and the Inter Media Art Institute, Germany. He is Professor-Emeritus of Electronic and Photographic Media at Webster University, St. Louis, Missouri.

Image: *Van McElwee. Incarnation, 2023. (still image), 7:06 min.*

More on Van McElwee at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/90-van-mcelwee/>

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Bruno David presents *Lifelines*, a sculpture installation by multi-disciplinary artist **Judith Shaw**. The installation in the WINDOW ON FORSYTH is on view 24/7 at 7513 Forsyth Blvd., Saint Louis (Downtown Clayton), MO. This is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

*Lifelines*, Judith Shaw's latest body of work, explores the fraying of human connection in our fractured world with amorphous sculptural forms made from spent bicycle inner tubes. Constructed by threading wire through the inner tubes and crimping the skin-like material, the work becomes a frieze of loosely woven clusters of black pleated formations. The entwined strands create a chain of appendages, crevices, and craters, akin to roots and topographical masses. Each segment is malleable and resilient, with a cushiony, stretchy appearance. The contoured lines are reminiscent of borders and boundaries as well as arteries, veins, and viscera. The strong resemblance to umbilical attachments references personal lineage and the universality of human circuitry. Configurative relationships speak to what separates humanity as well as what connects us to ourselves, each other, and the natural landscape. Societal fragmentation, personal alienation, and environmental dislocation are at the forefront.



In this work, Shaw investigates what is common to all humanity once the outer layers are removed, and an inner core revealed. Creating new forms from the misshapen scraps considers the possibility that a new ideal can unfold from the splintering of humankind. From rupture comes repair.

Image: Judith Shaw. *Lifelines*, 2023. Bicycle inner tubes, wire, dimensions variable.  
More on Judith Shaw at <https://brunodavidgallery.com/artists/196-judith-shaw/>

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Shawn Burkard, Damon Freed, Jean Mason, Judith Shaw, Van McElwee, and Bruno L. David are available for interviews. For images and additional information, please contact Bruno at [info@brunodavidgallery.com](mailto:info@brunodavidgallery.com)

Bruno David Gallery

Public Hours:

PUBLIC HOURS: Tuesday - Friday 11 – 6 pm, and by appointment

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#### ABOUT THE BRUNO DAVID GALLERY

Bruno David Gallery has been a leading art gallery since its establishment in Saint Louis in 2005. Bruno David represents some of the most innovative artists practicing in Saint Louis, along with artists of international reputation.

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