

# t r a n s f o r m e r

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Transformer's Board of Directors is extremely pleased to announce the election of James Alefantis as President of Transformer, as well as the election of three new Board members – Iona Rozeal Brown, Allison Cohen, and Jason Herrick.

Founded in 2002, Transformer is a Washington, DC based, 501 (c) 3 non-profit, artist-centered, visual arts organization. Connecting and promoting emerging artists through programs and services designed to help foster their creative ideas, Transformer also works to grow emerging artists' audience and patronage, and educate them about opportunities for career sustainability. Transformer serves as a catalyst and advocate for emergent expression in the visual arts, partnering with artists, curators, educators, arts leaders, and various cultural institutions to further contemporary art dialogue and strengthen community by supporting emerging artists in their development.

Transformer has enjoyed great success over the past four years, providing a broad range of cultural experiences to artists and audiences. With steadfast community support, the organization has grown into a nationally recognized, vitally important support system for emerging artists.

"I am so honored to be working with Transformer's Executive Director Victoria Reis and the rest of Transformer's dynamic staff and Board in furthering this unique organization's mission and services to artists and audiences. There is nothing like Transformer in Washington, DC - I am thrilled to be a part of propelling this incredibly important organization into its next stage of development," states Mr. Alefantis.

Now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of operations, Transformer is excited to continue presenting dynamic exhibitions to Washington audiences in its P St, NW project space, featuring cutting-edge visual work by artists based locally, nationally and internationally. Additionally in 2007, Transformer will launch the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Framework Panel Series addressing the topic of art criticism, and a new initiative – the Emerging Artists Flat File program – which will be active this spring, among other programs.

**James Alefantis** is an entrepreneur as well as a creative and passionate supporter of artists. James is currently the owner of two of Washington's finest, most art-centered restaurants, Buck's Fishing & Camping and Comet Ping Pong. These businesses support a diverse array of Washington's most talented emerging artists and venerable institutions – including the Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, the Washington Ballet, Transformer, and more - through events and fundraising. Additionally, James, with his husband, David Brock, politico and Founder of Media Matters for America, support the improvement of the national political and media environment. James Alefantis joined the board of Transformer in December 2003, co-chairing Transformer's 2nd and 3rd Annual Silent Auction & Benefit Party, and serving as Treasurer 2005-06. He was elected President of the Board of Transformer in December 2006.

**Iona Rozeal Brown** lives and works in Washington DC. She received a BFA in painting from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1999 and an MFA in painting from Yale University, 2002. Iona has

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exhibited her work in solo shows at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT, and Spellman College Museum of Fine Art, Atlanta, GA. She has been included in group shows at the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA, Saltworks Gallery, and the Atlanta, GA, Studio Museum in Harlem, NYC. Iona has also exhibited in the University of Virginia Museum of Art, Charlottesville, VA and the San Francisco Art Institute, Walter & McBean Galleries, San Francisco, CA. Iona is represented by G Fine Art in Washington, DC, and Sandroni Rey, in Los Angeles, CA. She joins Transformer's Board after serving on the organization's Advisory Council since May 2006.

**Allison Cohen** is a native of the DC area. She received her B.A. in Comparative Literature, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from Haverford College in 1993, and her J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1998, where she was a member of the Raven Honor Society. She is admitted to the bar in the District of Columbia and Maryland. Following her work at the law firm of Covington & Burling in DC, where she was a member of the firm's intellectual property, information technology, and corporate practice groups - in June 2004, Allison launched two businesses: an art consulting firm, Sightline, and a law practice, Law Office of Allison G. Cohen. As an art consultant, Allison provides her clients with tailored and unique artwork options for their homes and offices. As a lawyer, she represents individuals, small businesses, and organizations on a variety of intellectual property, contract/licensing, and business legal matters. Her clients range from website developers and digital content companies to visual artists and writers. Allison has been a member of the Host Committee for Transformer's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Silent Auction & Benefit Parties.

**Jason Herrick** grew up in Washington, DC. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Oxford on the impact of the French Revolution on collecting and the art market in Paris. Seeking to become familiar with New York's museum world, he spent three years at The Frick Collection in the director's office helping create new programs focused on promoting the museum's exhibition program, with the hope that this would attract new exhibition sponsors. He returned to DC in 2003 as the Deputy Corporate Relations Officer at the National Gallery of Art to help secure corporate sponsors for exhibitions. He is a member of the Board of the American Federation of Arts, an organization dedicated to sharing important exhibitions with regional museums across America. Jason recently served on the Host Committee of Transformer's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Silent Auction and Benefit Party. With an increasing interest in learning about the contemporary art world, Jason looks forward to "channeling some of these passions to helping Transformer advance its noble mission."

Iona, Allison and Jason join current board members: **James Alefantis**, Independent Curator and Writer; **Nick Pimentel**, graphic designer at Planaria Design & Toolbox Design, co-Founder of Gypsy Eyes Records; **Victoria Reis**, Executive Director of Transformer; **Ed Rock**, Independent Communications Consultant; and **Paige Conner Totaro**, Esquire.

Transformer is supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer.

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