

For Immediate Release

ARENA at Suite 806 is pleased to present *Wrap Around 15*, the fifteenth in a series of exhibitions curated by **Renée Riccardo** featuring recent works by **Adama Coulibaly, Steven Rudin and Scott Teplin**. **The location, Suite 806 at 89 Fifth Avenue (near 16th St.) in Manhattan** is the office of Lee Shapiro, Psy.D, Licensed Clinical Psychologist. **There will be an opening to the public this Saturday, May 5th from 2 – 5 p.m.** and afterwards the exhibition will open by appointment through October 2018. These artists take nature, collage and abstraction as their form of departure. The works that are presented in the context of a therapist's office offer the viewer a place to contemplate and transform their thoughts through a universal theme.

Adama Abib Coulibaly describes his continuing series of works of brightly colored intuitive paintings of oil marker on canvas, "Breathing Heart is my interpretation of the moment I found my breath of my character despite the harsh circumstances of my upbringing in Cote D'Ivoire. Much as in the painting presented here, "The Creak of Heart", I would have never been able to achieve a level of depth if I had not found the colors to place over the darkness of my childhood. My artistic endeavors often represent the singular moment when like a rushing tide of water, love and gratitude flooded my heart: first the moment I was able to breathe out the childish miasma of anger. This, like many of my other images, is an exercise of colorful geometry that rises, with depth, from a base of pure black. To me, expression is exhalation, and I find joy in simply breathing."

Coulibaly emerged from the Ivory Coast, a small African country devastated by generations-long conflict. Growing up amidst the horrors of unceasing civil warfare, Adama's young life was rooted in turmoil, his foundation sculpted by layers of darkness and uncertainty. Now 22 years old with seven years of experience in drawing and painting, Adama is the founder of Breathing Heart Artworks, an initiative to deliver a world of love, calmness and adventure through art. Coulibaly's paintings are in several private collections. His paintings from his Breathing Heart series are also currently on view in Surface 6, curated by Renée Riccardo at ARENA at Brooklyn Dermatology at 440 Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn. He lives and works in NYC.

Steven Rudin creates hand-cut paper collages that celebrate subjective reality with an emphasis on optimism and nostalgia. Visually, Rudin explores the optics

of perspective, producing an image that is somewhere between a daydream and a photograph. His inspiration comes from the fusion of old masters and high design with a narrative plus movement. For Rudin, making art is like an emotional rehearsal process for problem solving in real life, particularly related to agency and self-determination. Energized by visuospatial challenges, he translates compositions from classical painting into the realm of collage, sometimes to the point of shredding and reweaving his work. Overall, Rudin's aim is to capture an imaginary moment; one filled with positive symbolism and boundless beauty.

Rudin's nearly twenty years as a psychiatrist are intimately mixed into his art. Rudin is interested in the relationship of memory to identity, as well as how the brain differentiates between dreams, imaginative play, and real-life experience. Rudin sees collage as a metaphor for how the mind processes and organizes memories in a way that does not always correlate with logic, space, or time. Recently Rudin has exhibited in galleries and pop up spaces in Miami, New York and Los Angeles. He lives and works in NYC.

Scott Teplin states, "This series of botanical exaggerations celebrates my fascination with the fragile biological diversity within our ecosystem. I'm using line and color to further my exploration of two-dimensional dissections (anatomical, transportation and architecture) that help me to understand how things work."

Teplin has exhibited world-wide in museums and commercial galleries since 1998. His work is included in the permanent collections of The Museum of Modern Art (NYC and San Francisco), The New Museum, The Walker Art Center, The New York Public Library and several universities including Harvard, Yale, Stanford and California College of Arts and Crafts. He has exhibited work at MoMA-PS1, The Bronx Museum, The Drawing Center, The New Museum, the Brooklyn Museum of Art and The New York Public Library. His commissioned work is on permanent display as a mural in PS130 in Brooklyn and in the lobby of the new Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital in Baltimore. He has been featured on numerous occasions in pages of The New York Times, Art Forum, Art in America, Art News, Salon.com, The Huffington Post, Artnet, High Fructose, Juxtapoz and on NPR's Weekend Edition. He lives and works in NYC.

ARENA at Suite 806 is a unique venture between Renée Riccardo and her therapist, Lee Shapiro, Psy.D. Although the space is open to the public by appointment only (after the public opening) the aim is to create a stimulating, healing environment for the patients that visit and a new way to experience contemporary art firsthand. The pieces in the exhibition were carefully chosen to work off of one another regarding the colors, content and nuances that exist in each artist's work. These art works are placed in this particular setting to assist in creating a space to inspire all who enter.

Renée Riccardo is an independent curator. She was an adjunct curator at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York from 1987 to 1988 and independently organized shows of postmodernist photography from 1985 through 1990, including the traveling exhibition Acceptable Entertainment for Independent Curators Inc. In 1991 she opened ARENA, a gallery dedicated to emerging artists working in all media, and in 1996 and 1997 she co-organized with John Good the Art Exchange Show, an New York art fair that focused on new art, music and performance that took place in two abandoned Wall Street office buildings. Riccardo continued ARENA through 2004, having it sited in Soho, Cobble Hill, Williamsburg, and Chelsea at various times launching many artists very early in their careers such as Joanne Greenbaum, Rachel Harrison, Fabian Marcaccio, Jason Middlebrook, Marilyn Minter, Vik Muniz, Wangechi Mutu, Mickalene Thomas and Kehinde Wiley among dozens of other now well known artists. In 2004 she established ARENA Projects, a roving curatorial and consulting entity. She also currently regularly curates a space of contemporary art, ARENA at Brooklyn Dermatology at 440 Atlantic Ave. in Boerum Hill, Brooklyn. She recently co-curated a museum show entitled Maker, Maker with Paul Laster at The CMA in NYC in June 2017.

Lee Shapiro is a Psychologist who grew up in New York City on the Lower East Side. He attended two different private Quaker schools and graduated from Vassar College in 1995. He received a Masters in Counseling Psychology from Teacher's College, Columbia University and his Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), from the Ferkauf School of Psychology, Yeshiva University. His dissertation was on Post-College Transition. During his doctoral training he worked at both New York University and Marymount Manhattan College's counseling centers, as well as the Forensic Service of Kings County Hospital. He did his Internship at North Central Bronx Hospital. After completing a Post-Doctoral Fellowship at St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital he took a staff psychologist position at Woodhull Hospital where he worked in both the adult outpatient clinic and Inpatient service from 2007 until March 2013, when he entered full time private practice. In June of

2010 he completed the Eastern Group Psychotherapy Society's, "The One Year Training Program", and is qualified to be a Certified Group Psychotherapist. He has been working in private practice in downtown Manhattan since 2009.

For additional information regarding *Wrap Around 15* or to make an appointment to visit the exhibition please contact Renée Riccardo at 646 734 2261 or e-mail at arenagalbyreneericcardo@gmail.com.