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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Holly Zemke, Marketing & Development Coordinator  
704.636.1882 / [marketing@waterworks.org](mailto:marketing@waterworks.org)

**Event:** Summer Exhibition: Artistic Translations

**Dates:** Exhibition: May 28 – August 30, 2019

Friday, May 31: Meet the Artists at 5:30 pm & Opening Reception 6-8 pm

**Location:** Waterworks Visual Arts Center  
123 East Liberty Street, Salisbury, NC 28144

**Salisbury Native, artist Jeffrey Hargrave,  
featured in Waterworks' Summer Exhibition,  
Artistic Translations**

*Salisbury, NC* Waterworks Visual Arts Center is pleased to welcome home **JEFFREY HARGRAVE** as a featured solo artist in its summer exhibition, **Artistic Translations**, showing now through August 30. **LILIYA ZALEVSKAYA** and **NATACHA VILLAMIA SOCHAT** are also featured solo artists. The public is invited to a Meet the Artists and Opening Reception on Friday, May 31, starting at 5:30 pm, 123 East Liberty Street, Salisbury. Portraits by Isabella Almazan, the 2019 Dare to Imagine Award Winner, are also on view, and Isabella will accept her prize during the reception.

Entitled *A Dixie Homecoming*, Jeffrey Hargrave's show highlights his body of work made between 2016 and 2018 where the artist reimagines the canon of art history in the context of sexuality, identity, and today's fraught racial divides. Colorful, and indeed almost kitsch in parts, his paintings surprise and tease the eye's expectations by subverting revered classics – familiar to us but joyously reconstituted through an African-American and gay prism. The result is dramatic and highly personal, reflecting Hargrave's own life's struggles to find any semblance of himself in the legendary pinnacles of Western art.

Hargrave addresses the major issues of our time using intimate and humorous vehicles like his works on paper, recycled household objects and more recently mid-size canvases, in which he deconstructs such modern masters as Matisse, Modigliani, Manet and others of their ilk. His series Phallic Politics posits the perspective "the other" as implicit witness and consists of authentic posters from China's Cultural Revolution covered with cartoonish characters frequently used in the visual vocabulary of the artist. In other works, themes of pleasure, sexuality and urban life style are depicted in the Ukiyo-e stylized works on paper and canvas created in the artist's studio in Harlem where he has been based since 2013.

Hargrave's work speaks to the world but through a visual language deconstructed and reshaped by the artist's emotional experience of isolation and yearning for identity, as he taps into his own memories of growing up in the midst of a sharply divided community. Hargrave translates his personal experiences into playful, yet biting images that mix art-history clichés and racial stereotypes. Ultimately, the artist asks us to consider a 'What If' hypothetical in which the missing persona – himself and his kind – is included in the picture.

Jeffrey Hargrave attended the University of the North Carolina School of the Arts, Rhode Island School of Design, and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. His works have been exhibited at the Bronx Museum of the Arts, Art Miami, Contemporary Istanbul, KuBe Beacon, VOLTA Basel and other important platforms for cultural exchange and engagement.

Born in Kiev, Ukraine, **LILIYA ZALEVSKAYA** immigrated with her parents to America when she was a teenager, just as the Soviet Union fell apart. "This continues to inform my interest in how social structures are perceived, versus how they are experienced by the individuals living within them," Liliya explains. *Premonitions* by Zalevskaya is a grouping of large tapestries, which speak to her personal experience as a young person in the Ukraine having to make an abrupt transition to life in a new country with new rules and expectations.

Liliya studied art in the University of North Carolina system, earning a BFA in Printmaking at UNC Charlotte, and a MFA in Digital Media/Performance at UNC Greensboro. She currently lives and works in Charlotte with her husband, artist David Scott Sackett, and is an instructor of Digital Photography, Printmaking, and Art History Survey at Gaston College in Dallas, NC.

**NATACHA VILLAMIA SOCHAT** was born in New York City, the oldest child of immigrant parents with only elementary school educations. At that time, the United States was a symbol of opportunity, and Natacha's parents desired that she get an education. An artist from an early age, she studied art *and* Biology in college, and chose to be a physician to fulfill her responsibility to her family and her love for helping others. Natacha's inclination and familial support encouraged her to simultaneously be an artist and a doctor. In addition to her scientific profession, Natacha's influencers include her father's experience as a Cuban revolutionary, and her makeup of Puerto Rican, Cuban, Spanish and American cultures.

Named for the art she creates, *Retablos* is a collection of frames or shelves, which display personal and religious objects above and behind an altar. A common practice from Natacha's childhood was the presence of personal altars/niches of worship in many homes that she visited. Merriam Webster dictionary defines retablo as, "A votive offering made in the form of a religious picture typically portraying Christian saints, painted on a panel, and hung in a church or chapel especially in Spain and Mexico." As an adult, Natacha realized this devotional space was part of cultures beyond her own. Natacha says, "I create retablos as an appropriation of this personal practice for ideas or sentiments that are valuable to me as a human being, woman, mother, child, wife, artist, and healer".

Exhibiting her portraits alongside the above three professional artists is **ISABELLA ALMAZON**, who is this year's Dare to Imagine Award Winner. The *Dare to Imagine Award* is presented annually and is made possible through a gift from Susan and Edward Norvell. This special award, bearing a cash

scholarship, honors one Rowan County graduating senior whose artwork most exemplifies the creative potential of the human spirit, heart, and hand.

Within the safe spaces of Waterworks' galleries, *Artistic Translations* continues the museum's intentional efforts to host art, and artists who give voice to often difficult and very personal human experiences. Art as a vehicle used to improve understanding and compassion is quite powerful, yet forgiving. There is art for all people. Come to Waterworks Visual Arts Center to engage with this newest exhibition of the 2019-2020 season.

Waterworks Visual Arts Center galleries and sculpture garden are open to the public Monday-Friday, 10 am-5 pm, and Saturday, 10 am-2 pm. *Artistic Translations* will be on exhibition through August 30, 2019. Admission is free. You are invited to stop by before or after work, during your lunch hour, or after school with the kids.

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*Waterworks Visual Arts Center is a 501c3 nonprofit organization accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. Its mission is to provide diverse opportunities in the arts for all people through exhibitions, education, and outreach. Waterworks is funded by individual memberships, corporations and businesses, foundations, the City of Salisbury, and Rowan County. Waterworks receives general support from the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.*