

## In the galleries: At two Washington spaces, art of a political caliber



David Mordini's "Sacrificial Mourner," 3-D printed guns on fabric, steel and cast aluminum. (Courtesy Zenith Community Arts Foundation)

By Mark Jenkins  
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### Play Protection Peril

At the center of the concluding installment of "Play Protection Peril" is a piece that requires updates with sickening regularity. Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg's "Alienable Right to Life" is a U.S. flag inscribed with the names of all the mass-shooting victims in the United States since the killings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo. By the first day of the show at H-Space, three more names had been appended to the bottom. At the Aug. 3 opening, visitors discussed preliminary reports of carnage in El Paso; news of the Dayton killings arrived the next day. In total, 31 more names to be added.

Sponsored by the Zenith Community Arts Foundation, "Peril" responds in part to local gun violence. Nancy Nesvet's "Fear and Loathing in D.C." suspends a plastic gun before a dark painting of a woman's face, while John Mein's flower-carrying metal figures are fabricated from decommissioned guns welded together. (The sculptures were made with help from participants in the D.C. police department's Youth Creating Change program.) Stephanie Mercedes dangles 33 chimes made from bullet shells, one for each of the D.C. homicides since the first part of the show opened in June.

Other contributions are less geographically specific, if no less chilling. David Mordini places a cast-aluminum head behind a black veil studded with 3-D-printed guns. Liz Lescault serves on a platter a putrid meal of a gun, bullet shells and clay worms. Lea Craigie-Marshall stages a vignette that features a gore-spattered baby doll, a pool of simulated blood on the floor and a shopping cart full of "MAGA"-branded products.

Peril Through Aug. 25 at H-Space, 1932 Ninth St. NW (entrance at 1917 9½ St. NW).

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/in-the-galleries-at-two-washington-spaces-art-of-a-political-caliber/2019/08/15/387c0768-bd15-11e9-b873-63ace636af08\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/in-the-galleries-at-two-washington-spaces-art-of-a-political-caliber/2019/08/15/387c0768-bd15-11e9-b873-63ace636af08_story.html)