

# *Windows into DC @ Washington Convention Center*



With a small bit of fanfare, the [Walter E. Washington Convention Center](#) and the [DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#) unveiled a public art project at the Convention Center this week. This "pop-up" gallery transforms empty retail, window and display space at the Convention Center into works of art. *Windows into DC* highlights 14 area artists, three of whom are based in the Shaw neighborhood, where the project is located. The artists were given a canvas of glass to produce a variety of work, which was inspired by the neighborhood and the District.

The windows and display cases are located around the outside of the Convention Center along 7th Street, through the underpass toward 9th Street, along 9th, and along N Street. The work is a temporary extension of the 120 piece permanent collection found on the inside of the Convention Center.

Half of the artists transformed a large window and glass door area in which they used a reverse painting technique, applying paint from the inside of the window. Many used black outlines to start and then layered color on top to finish the composition. Jason Clark's (aka JAS) work shows thick outlines of figures in a field of green, taking down iron fences. Cory Oberndorfer's selection is of a graphic monochromatic composition of the cathedral-like ceilings of a Metro station, in neutral yellows.

Each window is distinct and reflects the style of the individual artist, with much of the imagery drawn from the neighborhood or the city itself. One of the windows was painted by 3rd and 4th grade students from the New Community of Children's after school program. This window is fun and playful. It shows a street scape taken from the neighborhood highlighting some of its landmarks, along with intersections and the Shaw Metro stop. Located right outside of the Convention Center Metro stop, it is a good ambassador to the project.



*Image of Cory Oberndorfer's Metro by Sarah Massey, courtesy DCCAH.*

The painted windows are a pleasant surprise and add color and a vibrancy to areas directly outside of the Convention Center that can often feel desolate when there is little foot traffic. But because of the reflective nature of glass, it is often hard to view the selections in their entirety. None of the artists seem to take this into account, and instead present a glass painting as one would view artwork on the wall of a gallery. The reflections can be distracting, and depending on the time of day and angle of light, can obscure a good portion of the pieces.

Under the passageway between 7th and 9th Street, artists were given a window display case to paint or hang their work. Here is where the medium diversifies and traditional painting, photography, and mixed media is showcased. The majority of work on display here has the luxury of appropriate gallery lighting, which in combination with the shelter of the passage way provides for easier viewing.

Photographer Colin Winterbottom filled his case with various black and white photographs taken from unusual and hard to get to points within the District. One such image is of a strong geometric piece from when the Convention Center was being constructed.

Michael Dax Iacovone also presents new work in an installation of his four-month-long journey throughout the District. Each walk Iacovone took is plotted on a map with either red or blue yarn. A large build up of red yarn almost dissects the map in half.

*Windows into DC is a self guided exhibit and is on display 24 hours a day until March 2010. An informational brochure is available in the main lobby of the Convention Center.*