

## Alicia Leeke embarks on conceptual art series

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By Warren Hughes

Artist Alicia Leeke is known for her landscapes, but you may not know that she works in series. As a former sales representative, Leeke compares a series of art in a body of work to that of multiple product lines in sales. This means she has a series of landscapes, a series of French cityscapes, and her most recent body of work her series of digital mixed media cityscapes.

More recently, her work has been inspired by Susan kae Grant of Texas and commercial photographer John E. Powell. Leeke says she has learned the most from photographers recently. She was greatly inspired by a lecture Grant presented at Redux Studios in Charleston, S.C., that significantly focused her interests more on conceptual art which tells a story. In her most recent exhibition at Frame of Mind, she showcased a new body of work entitled "Lost and Found."

This series of digital mixed media works addresses the issues of consumerism and manufacturing excess by society's over consumption. We live in a throw-away society and manufacturers cater to this by producing decorative objects en masse. Sadly, most of these items end up in landfills or recycled on the shelves at local antique malls or thrift stores. Leeke's concept for the show is to encourage consumers to choose more wisely and spend more for quality merchandise they will cherish for years to come versus throwing it away.

Leeke points out it is important for artists to grow. "Sometimes I feel like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," she says. "I strive to create peaceful paintings landscape paintings. On the other hand, there the scientific side of me wants to produce art that addresses environmental issues, yet also in a likable way, she adds." Often societal and political issues can be communicated through visual arts easier just as songwriters often communicate through lyrics.

In June 2014 Leeke was awarded a grant by the Charleston Scientific and Cultural Education Fund. She will use the grant to produce a traveling exhibition entitled: View from Under the Microscope: Science- based Learning Through Art. The exhibition will educate the non-scientific community about the importance Phytoplankton play in our life and why we need to be good stewards of our water bodies. In return, the scientific community can learn the important role art plays in science. This body of work is expected to be complete in May 2015.





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