

MARIAN APRIL GLEBES

DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT: RESEARCH AND RESIDUES

Exhibit Runs: July 31 - September 13, 2026**Closing Reception & Artist Talk:** Sunday, September 13, 2026**Gallery Hours:** Saturdays from 1-5pm, during public events, or by appointment

In historic preservation, "demolition by neglect" names a particular kind of violence: not the wrecking ball, but the slow withdrawal of care. A roof left unpatched. A gutter left to overflow. A structure allowed, deliberately or otherwise, to fail under its own weight until failure becomes the justification for its removal. It is a term invented to describe what happens to buildings, but it names something I recognize at a smaller, more intimate scale — the scale of a single household, a single room, a single relationship to the walls that shelter us. What happens when neglect is not an accident of policy or absentee ownership, but a private, ongoing choice? What does it mean to live inside a structure that is not being maintained, and to know that the not-maintaining is itself a message?

Demolition by Neglect: Research and Residues takes up this question through the material vocabulary of the Baltimore home: drywall, dust, joint compound, graphite and oil on paper, and other salvaged fragments drawn from my own domestic spaces and places. These are not metaphors I have imported from elsewhere. They are the literal substance of walls — the skin of a house, and the material most often called upon to disguise a wound rather than to address what caused it. Joint compound smooths a crack; it does not ask why the crack appeared. This exhibition asks that question instead, using the tools of documentation, cultural landscape analysis, and conceptual art practice to slow down and look closely at what usually goes unexamined: the accumulated evidence of care given, care withheld, and the long residue left behind by both.

I come to this research as both an artist and a preservation planner, trained to read landscapes and buildings as palimpsests — surfaces layered with the visible and invisible traces of use, change, and abandonment over time. Cultural landscape theory teaches that practicing this kind of looking is itself a discipline, a way of seeing what remains and what has been erased, and of understanding a place as something made continuously by the people who inhabit it, even as it makes them in return. I bring that same discipline home. What are the character-defining features of a domestic life under duress? What integrity is lost, and what integrity survives, in a space that has been allowed — or forced — to deteriorate?

Rebecca Falkoff's *Possessed: A Cultural History of Hoarding* offers a companion framework, one built on the premise that hoarding is not primarily an excess of things but a conflict of value: the hoarder and everyone else disagree about what an object is worth, and that disagreement becomes visible in the accumulation itself. I am interested in the inverse problem — not what is kept beyond reason, but what is discarded, patched over, or left permanently unfinished, and what that refusal communicates. Many of us now find ourselves sorting through the households of parents and grandparents, confronting decades of collected objects that the next generation does not want and

cannot use. That sorting is its own kind of research: an inventory of what a life accumulated, and a reckoning with how little of it can be carried forward. My studio practice performs a parallel inventory, cataloguing the residues of a domestic interior — dust, drywall dust, scraped compound, the graphite outlines of things once positioned and later removed — as a record of occupancy rather than a memorial to it.

This project also owes a debt to the conceptual artists of the 1960s and 70s who first proposed that the record of an act could stand in for the act itself, and that the discarded, the demolished, and the overlooked deserved the same attention as the finished object. Lucy Lippard's account of the "dematerialization of the art object" describes a moment when documentation — a photograph, a drawing, a description — became inseparable from, and sometimes more durable than, the work it recorded. Gordon Matta-Clark's building cuts sliced into condemned houses to expose their structural interiors, turning demolition into a form of disclosure. Rachel Whiteread cast the negative space of a soon-to-be-demolished London house, making a monument out of absence itself. Alan Kaprow dissolved the boundary between art and daily life, insisting that sweeping a floor could be an artwork if performed with sufficient attention. The artists of Arte Povera turned to humble, unglamorous materials — plaster, ash, rags, dust — to insist that value need not depend on permanence or preciousness. Each of these practices refuses the idea that only the finished, maintained, and intact deserves to be seen. Demolition by Neglect extends that refusal to the household: a place where unfinished walls and unresolved conditions are not failures to photograph after the fact, but the primary evidence.

The nationwide reckoning with Confederate monuments offers one more useful lens. When a monument is removed, what remains — an empty pedestal, a patch of bare grass, a wall never repainted — can itself become a counter-monument, a site that holds memory more honestly than the object it replaced ever did. I ask the same of a room. What does it mean to leave a wall unmended, to let the failing plaster show, to keep the dust rather than sweep it away? What does housekeeping mean, understood not as maintenance but as a conceptual practice — a daily, ongoing negotiation over what gets tended, what gets ignored, and who decides? This exhibition does not resolve that negotiation. It documents it, materially and literally, as research: an accounting of what a home holds onto, what it lets go of, and what it cannot help but keep.

Artist Statement

The landscapes and structures we inhabit are never neutral. They record who was cared for, who was not, and what was permitted to fall away. My training in cultural landscape practice — reading a place as a layered record of visible and invisible change over time — shapes how I look at everything, from a public monument to a single household wall. An artist, gardener, and preservation planner based in the historic Jones Falls River Valley of Baltimore, I ask a single, recurring question in all my work: how do we make a place, and how does a place make us?

Demolition by Neglect: Research and Residues turns my ongoing research on the relational complexities of the built environment toward the domestic interior. I work in drywall, joint compound, dust, and graphite or oil on paper—much of it salvaged from my own home—because these are the materials most often used to conceal a problem rather than to address it. My processes of extraction and reinvention are indebted to my ongoing research on the nationwide reckoning with Confederate monuments, which has shown how absence, neglect, and what remains after removal can themselves hold memory. This work sits inside or alongside that reckoning, treating the ordinary materials of upkeep as evidence: of a life lived, a place maintained or neglected, and what gets carried forward when so much cannot be.

Working in drywall, joint compound, dust, and graphite and oil on paper salvaged from her own domestic spaces, Baltimore-based artist and preservation planner Marian April Glebes examines what it means to maintain—or fail to maintain—the places that house/shelter us.

Interior, clockwise from entrance



Dwelling no. 09, 2025/26

Graphite & conte on Fabriano Medioevalis
7 ¾" x 6"
11" x 9" framed
\$580



Dwelling no. 02, 2025/26

Graphite & conte on Fabriano Medioevalis
7 ¾" x 6"
11" x 9" framed
\$700



Dwelling no. 03, 2025/26

Graphite, acrylic, & conte on Fabriano Medioevalis
7 ¾" x 6"
11" x 9" framed
\$700



NR-1013 (No. 03), 2025

Oil & chalk pastel on gypsum board
5" x 3 ¾"
9" x 7 ¾" framed
\$600



Demo, 2026

Oil on canvas harvested from David Cloutier's basement, originally stretched as demonstration for MICA painting students c. 2006
26" x 26"
27 ¼" x 27 ¼" framed
\$5200



Untitled Material Study (5906 Kingswood Road, first attempt), 2018 - 2026

Section of wall harvested from the artist's aunt's home prior to its sale for demolition
18" x 17"
23 ¼" x 21 ¾" framed
Price on Request



Negative Space 01, 2019 – 2026

Dust & graphite on archival mat board
18" x 25"
19 ½" x 29" framed
\$3800



NR-1013 (Untitled Study in Making Holes), 2025

Latex paint on gypsum board
9" x 9 ½"
14" x 14" framed
\$3200



NR-1013 (everything was finally clean and then the water line cracked/a necessary harm), 2025

Latex paint and drywall mending tape on gypsum board, performance by the artist in collaboration with Frank Wagner, plumber
9 ½" x 7"
15" x 13" framed
\$1400



Untitled Object no. 03 (from the series "Every Garden is a Graveyard"), 2026

Graphite & oil on panel
6" x 6"
7" x 7" framed
\$1200



Negative Space 03, 2019 – 2026

Dust on archival mat board
16" x 14"
19" x 17" framed
\$2400



B-4504 (Plinth 02), 2026

Oil, graphite, conte & spray paint on
watercolor paper
6" x 6"
9 1/2" x 9 1/2" framed
\$1200



NR-1013 (No. 02), 2025

Oil & chalk pastel on gypsum board
5" x 3 3/4"
9" x 7 3/4" framed
\$600



NR-1013 (No. 01), 2025

Conte on gypsum board
5" x 3 3/4"
9" x 7 3/4" framed
\$600



NR-1013 (No. 06), 2025

Oil, graphite, & gesso on gypsum board
5" x 3 3/4"
9" x 7 3/4" framed
\$600



NR-1013 (No. 04), 2025

Oil & chalk pastel on gypsum board
5" x 3 3/4"
9" x 7 3/4" framed
\$600



NR-1013 (No. 05), 2025

Oil & chalk pastel on gypsum board
5" x 3 3/4"
9" x 7 3/4" framed
\$600



B-4504 (Plinth 01), 2026

Oil, graphite, conte & spray paint on
watercolor paper
6" x 4 1/8"
9 1/2" x 7 3/4" framed
\$1100



NR-1013 (No. 07), 2025

Oil & graphite on gypsum board
5" x 3 3/4"
9" x 7 3/4" framed
\$600



Monumental House Drawing no. 16, 2025/26

2025/26
Graphite & oil pastel on Fabriano
Medioevalis
3 3/8" x 5 1/8"
9" x 7 3/4" framed
\$580



Untitled Material Study (5906 Kingswood Road, second attempt), 2018 - 2026

Section of wall harvested from the artist's
aunt's home prior to its sale for demolition
12" x 11"
16 1/2" x 15 1/2" framed
Price on Request



NR-1013 (coping mechanisms/unnecessary harm/tools from a past toolbox), 2025

Chalk pastel on gypsum board
12 3/4" x 12 1/2"
17 1/4" x 17" framed
\$1600



Untitled Object no. 03 (from the series "Matter Battle"), 2019 - 2026

Joint compound on panel
6" x 6"
7" x 7" framed
\$1200

Floor



Untitled Material Study (performance of grief/becoming/transition/claiming/surviving/moving); Known as The Black Bricks, 2019 – present

100% recycled material black bricks made in collaboration with Steve Blankenbeker and Taylor Clay; bricks were left outside in a hurricane at the factory prior to firing, finished, then shipped to the artist via Fedex

Dimensions variable

Price on Request



Ceramic House (from the Series “Model Homes”), 2017

Gloss white glazed stoneware

6.5” x 5” x 3”

\$2600



What we trust to by infallible; known as The White Bricks, 2019 – 2020

Made in collaboration with Steve Blankenbeker and Taylor Clay; bricks that had fallen off the factory line during manufacture were harvested by the artist, fired, and glazed.

Dimensions variable

\$4800 ea.

Howard Street window, left to right



Return/Exchange, 2017 – present

Sections of flooring extracted from the artist’s home for the purpose of installing central air conditioning and a new furnace; Bryant Preferred 2 1/2-ton air conditioning 16 seer Model# 126BNA030000; Coil Model# CNPVP3017ALA; Performance boost 80% gas furnace Model #58PHB070; Pad for unit to set on; Condensate pump; Permit; Refrigerant line connecting the indoor unit to the outdoor unit; All ductwork necessary to complete job

Dimensions variable

\$11, 616 (total project cost)



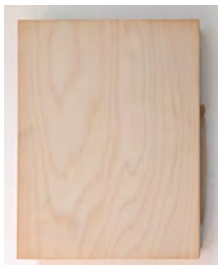
Archival Material (Yellow Wallpaper from the Sewing Room, 1615 N. Springwood Drive), 1977 – 2009, retrieved December 2025

Portion of wallpaper saved by the artist’s parents from when they installed the wallpaper in what would become the artist’s childhood bedroom

12 1/2” x 10 3/8”

13 1/2” x 10 7/8” framed

\$415,000 adjusted to current market conditions (2009, reference Deed Book 4448, Page 065, ID # 13-148-14111693)



Untitled Object no. 04, 2025

Canvas on panel

13 3/4” x 10 3/4”

\$380



Marian April Glebes is an artist, researcher, and preservation planner based in the historic Jones Falls River Valley of Baltimore, MD. She received her BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in 2004, her Masters of Fine Arts from University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC) in 2009, and her Masters in City and Regional Planning and Master of Science in Historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania's Weitzman School of Design in 2024. For her research at UPenn, Glebes was the inaugural recipient of the Aaron Wunch Award for Public History of the Built Environment (2025) and contributed to *Yonderlands* with Billy Flemming at the McHarg Center for Urbanism and Ecology (2021-2022). She was the inaugural Artist-in-Residence at the Baltimore Museum of Art Joseph Center for Education (2015-2016), and a three-time National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Creative Placemaking awardee for her collaborative work in the public realm (2011, 2016, 2018). In the last decade, Glebes has taught part-time at the Maryland Institute College of Art's General Fine Arts Department, provided technical assistance and policy solutions to artists, architects, and property owners on artist run spaces through her work at the Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation and the Neighborhood Design Center, and contributed to research and design for heritage preservation projects as part of the Preservation Planning team at Quinn Evans, AIA's 2024 Firm of the Year. She is currently working as an Historic Preservation Planner at Baltimore City's Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP), serving as Chair of the Lower Jones Falls River and Inner Harbour Team for the Jones Falls River Valley watershed's 2025-2027 Strategic Planning initiative, and stewarding The Mobile Community Brick Factory & Monument - a public art process that supports social and spatial change in order to build a new kind of community-driven monumental public space using personalized, hand-made bricks. Glebes is the 2025-2026 Rubys Alumni Grant awardee from the Robert W Deutsch Foundation for this project, which also received a 2025 Public Art Across Maryland grant from the Maryland State Arts Council. In 2026-2027 she is Artist-in-Residence for Johns Hopkins University's SNF Agora Institute. Cultural landscapes and place-based inquiry underpin her interdisciplinary practice - she asks how we make a place, and how a place makes us.

Artist Statement

The landscapes and structures we inhabit are never neutral. They record who was cared for, who was not, and what was permitted to fall away. My training in cultural landscape practice — reading a place as a layered record of visible and invisible change over time — shapes how I look at everything, from a public monument to a single household wall. An artist, gardener, and preservation planner based in the historic Jones Falls River Valley of Baltimore, I ask a single, recurring question in all my work: how do we make a place, and how does a place make us?

Demolition by Neglect: Research and Residues turns my ongoing research on the relational complexities of the built environment toward the domestic interior. I work in drywall, joint compound, dust, and graphite or oil on paper—much of it salvaged from my own home—because these are the materials most often used to conceal a problem rather than to address it. My processes of extraction and reinvention are indebted to my ongoing research on the nationwide reckoning with Confederate monuments, which has shown how absence, neglect, and what remains after removal can themselves hold memory. This work sits inside or alongside that reckoning, treating the ordinary materials of upkeep as evidence: of a life lived, a place maintained or neglected, and what gets carried forward when so much cannot be.

About Current Space

Current Space is an artist-run gallery, studio, and outdoor performance space, nourishing an ongoing dialogue between artists, activists, performers, designers, curators, and thinkers. Operating since November 2004, we are committed to showcasing, developing, and broadening the reach of artists locally and internationally.

Thank You

Programs at Current Space are made possible in part by supporting members like you and William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund, creator of the Baker Artist Portfolios at BakerArtist.org.

Become a sustaining member

Support the programs you value by becoming a member of Current Space. Membership comes with a range of perks, from artwork discounts to free event admission to invites to Members Only parties. Memberships truly have a big impact on what we're able to do. Thank you for your support!



