

## Soft Monuments

Solo exhibition by Kat Thompson

On view September 6 through October 11, 2025

**Closing reception Saturday, October 11, 2025, 3–6pm**

1353 U St NW, Washington, DC 20009



Kat Thompson, *Fun at the Fair in Virginia*. 2025.

**Washington, DC:** Hamiltonian Artists is pleased to present Kat Thompson’s solo exhibition, *Soft Monuments*. Interrogating the presence of colonial-era monuments in the Caribbean, Thompson’s latest body of work considers the quiet power that markers of memory hold, and their capacity to capture, obscure, and reflect post-colonial transatlantic memory.

Traditionally, the state-sanctioned structures are built to be permanent, spectacular commemorations of imperial power and conquest. *Soft Monuments* offers a counter-approach: intimate and delicate works that evidence time rather than resist it. Drawing from personal archives, Thompson thoughtfully samples Kodachrome and Ektachrome slides, 16mm color home movies, and found photos—remixing them into collage-based installations, video and sculptural works. Repurposing photographic materials that naturally fade, warp, and shift in color, Thompson foregrounds fragility, the passage of time and its influence on our recollection of the past.

For Thompson, softness is found in both physical qualities and emotional affect. Within socioeconomic landscapes shaped by redlining and privatization that boosts tourism while restricting local access, souvenirs—like monuments—become charged symbols of extraction and erasure. Nodding to what scholar Krista Thompson calls “tropicalization,” the exhibition features fabricated 3D-printed film slide keychains, found travel brochures, and related objects. In contrast to their polished aesthetics, archival images that were captured and kept through intimate lived experiences anchor the viewer in the interconnected, tender realities that exist on the margins of touristic fantasy.

Deploying layered meaning and contradiction, Thompson’s soft monuments invite viewers to maneuver between the personal and political, cultural authenticity and neo-colonial artifice. Offering broader context for her latest work, Thompson shares the following,

“In the Caribbean, monuments often stand as silent witnesses. They rise from town squares and waterfronts as if neutral markers of heritage, but their permanence is a fiction—one that masks the violence, displacement, and historical erasures they’re built on. I want to challenge this and other commemorative traditions, which are so deeply rooted in colonial power, by proposing alternative models that center fragility and multiplicity.”

In congruence with DC Art All Night, there will be extended gallery hours on Saturday, September 13, 6–9pm. An artist-led exhibition tour will be held on Saturday, October 4, 3–5pm; link to register [here](#). Additional programming to be announced. Visit Hamiltonian Artists' [website](#) and follow [@hamiltonian\\_artists](#) on Instagram for more information about corresponding public programs.

### ABOUT THE ARTIST

**Kat Thompson** (b. 1991; California) is a lens-based artist and educator based in Virginia whose practice bridges photography, textiles, sculptural collage, and installation. By layering and interweaving these mediums, Thompson explores how images and objects hold memory, history, and identity, particularly within the context of the African Diaspora.



Being of Jamaican heritage, Thompson draws from the complexities of her dual identity to create work that negotiates belonging, place, and representation. Her work has been exhibited across Virginia and the greater Washington, D.C. area, including presentations at the 1780 Gallery and Page Bond Gallery in Richmond, Visible Records in Charlottesville, the Fenwick Gallery and Gillespie Gallery at George Mason University, and the Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art in Reston. Thompson is currently a 2023-2025 Hamiltonian Artists Fellow in Washington D.C.

Thompson holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography from George Mason University and her Master of Fine Arts in Photography & Film from Virginia Commonwealth University. Alongside her studio practice, she is dedicated to education, sharing her knowledge and passion for lens-based art with the next generation of artists.

### ABOUT HAMILTONIAN ARTISTS

Hamiltonian Artists' mission is to nurture community and increase access to space, opportunity, and resources for emerging artists, through impactful programs and exhibitions. The organization reaffirms and expands upon its originating vision as an incubator for the professional development of emerging visual artists, serving as a hub for Washington, DC's, creative economy and a vibrant center for contemporary art in the DC area. With its unique investment in emerging artists, Hamiltonian Artists provides resources to aid their development in important business skills, professional experiences, and visibility to support and sustain their art career.

Through the fellowship program, exhibitions, studios, artist talks, public events, membership program for art collectors at all levels, and so much more, the organization contributes to the vitality of the area's arts scene by deepening the appreciation for contemporary art and culture throughout Washington, DC, and beyond.

**HOW TO VISIT**

Location: Hamiltonian Artists, 1353 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20009

Hours: Thursday–Saturday, 11am–6pm

For more information visit [hamiltonianartists.org](https://hamiltonianartists.org).

**CONTACT**

For press inquiries and additional info, contact Anisa Olufemi, director of programs and curator [anisa@hamiltonianartists.org](mailto:anisa@hamiltonianartists.org).

Images available [here](#).