

CLARE

GALLERY

at the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry

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Exhibition *Depressive Realism* Opens at Clare Gallery

Hartford — The Clare Gallery is pleased to present *Depressive Realism*, an exhibition by East Hartford, Connecticut artist, Adam Viens. The exhibition features large-scale mixed media paintings that are complex and challenging in their visual language. The work poses more questions than it answers. It requires the viewer to reflect on the artist's intentionality, the emotions the pieces evoke, as well as the larger subject of "depressive realism," a term adopted in the 1970s.

The exhibition is free and open to the public and extends from April 17–May 29, 2016. **A reception and panel discussion will be held on Monday, May 16th 6:00–8:00 p.m.—panel discussion at 6:30 p.m.** Panelists are Adam Viens, the artist; Michael Galaburri, Program Specialist for Art Connection Studio; Faith Vos Winkel, MSW, Assistant Child Advocate, Office of the Child Advocate State of Connecticut; and Father Thomas Gallagher, Pastor and Guardian at St. Patrick - St. Anthony Church. The panel will discuss a variety of processes that are often used to help adults (who may have psychiatric, developmental, or behavioral disabilities) connect with themselves and others and build successful daily lives.

In preparing the exhibition, Adam Viens wished to delineate his series, *Depressive Realism*, into two emotional states of being: "chaos" and "quiet." Both are important to understanding Viens' conceptual framework. If you examine the visual language of his works—enhanced by the Gallery's two exhibition spaces—you can explore the varied perceptions contained within each piece.

Viens' initial motivation in creating his artwork was to explore the term "depressive realism" and its connection to psychology. "Depressive realism" asks whether or not the depressed individual has a more accurate perception of reality (and themselves) than an individual who is not depressed. The term, as well as Viens' exploration of it, suggests important questions: Where does one's view of the world come from, and how much does perception play a role? Does the harsh nature of the world cause depression, or does depression engender one's ability to perceive such harshness?

The process for Viens is primary, but the physicality of his materials is also important. Paint, three-dimensional objects, fabric, text, and sand are often mixed together, for both their formal aesthetics and their value in communicating a message. Viens carefully constructs his canvases with hidden messages that need to be deciphered. Some objects are behind or tucked into others. Some are glued, stapled or sewn onto the canvases. All of these processes are meant to work synergistically to communicate a message and provide catharsis through his art-making. For more information, visit his website at manart.wordpress.com.

The Clare Gallery primarily features exhibitions that emphasize world religions or interfaith themes, as well as social justice themes, on either a global or local level. The Gallery is housed in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at 285 Church Street, Hartford, CT. The Center is part of St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church, a vibrant and active downtown faith community.

The Clare Gallery's hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays; and 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Sundays. The Gallery and all related events are open to the public. Free parking is available directly across from the church in the Saints Lot. The facility is handicapped accessible. More information may be found at spsact.org/clare2.