

Elyse Defoor

elyse@elysedefoor.com

www.ElyseDefoor.com

404.667.1902

## ARTIST STATEMENT 2025

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As has long been said, and said rightly, the personal is political.

I use photography, sculpture, installation, drawing and painting – whatever it takes – to express a variety of conditions faced by the human body and spirit.

My practice is inspired by moments of joy, pain and loss; the artwork is generated from pieces of evidence left behind after substantial experiences of transformation and personal evolution. I tend to work very serially with each body of work evolving from the ones before and catalog each of these as chapters in my oeuvre – “the art of personal mythology.”

It is my belief that great art stirs mystery and memory and I strive to create unfolding experiences that draw on our unique, but collective human emotions.

## BIOGRAPHY

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Elyse Defoor (b. Greenville, SC, 1952) is a multi-disciplinary artist, juror and curator who lives and works in Atlanta. She received her education from the University of Georgia and the Atlanta College of Art. For the last thirty years, she has used her art to respond to the wonders and the tragedies of the world. She consistently uses personal iconography as a vehicle to outwardly express her inner response to universal conditions. From this passionate inspiration, she produces artwork that causes a visceral shift in the eye and mind of the viewer.

Defoor’s photography, drawings, paintings, sculpture, and large-scale installations have gained international recognition. In addition to numerous private collections in the USA, Singapore, Switzerland and Africa, her work has been collected by MOCA GA, Acoustic Headquarters, and the New York Public Library.

In early 2025, Defoor's work from her "Second Skins" series was featured in a two-person exhibition entitled "Stripped Down" at the Spruill Gallery, and was reviewed in ArtsATL.

A solo, survey exhibition entitled "Slivers of Time," with a selection thirty-four of Defoor’s works of art (including her first oil painting at age ten) was hosted by the Art Institute of Atlanta in 2022. Her work was also selected for the group exhibitions "Gathered" at MOCA GA and MOTION > BLUR at Praxis Photo Arts Center in Minneapolis.

Defoor’s residencies include The Hambidge Center for the Arts and VCCA, The Virginia Center for Creative Arts.

*The 2024 February issue of "Buckhaven" magazine featured "Elyse Defoor's World" with an image from "Beautiful Danger" on its cover.*

*Video documentation of "Elyse Defoor–Slivers of Time," "Loss. Redemption. Grace," "Uncloaked," "Unbridled," "all of us, alone" and her "Relics of Marriage" outdoor installation, along with exhibition tours may be viewed on Elyse Defoor–YouTube and on her website, ElyseDefoor.com.*

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## Solo & Group Exhibits

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- 2025 *Stripped Down*, The Spruill Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2024 *A Room of Her Own*, The ArtsXchange, Atlanta, GA
- 2022 *Slivers of Time*, The Art Institute of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA (solo)  
*Motion > Blur*, Honorable Mention Award, International Juried Photography Exhibition, Praxis Photo Arts Center, Minneapolis, MN  
*Gathered V*, Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia, Atlanta, GA
- 2019 *Uncloaked*, Thomas Deans Fine Art, Atlanta, GA (solo)  
*The Object Show*, EBD4, Atlanta, GA  
*Loss. Redemption. Grace*, EBD4, Atlanta, GA
- 2018 *Unbridled*, City of Atlanta Gallery 72, Atlanta, GA (solo)  
*Civil Discourse*, Kibbee Gallery, Atlanta, GA  
*Transformers*, Dalton Gallery at Agnes Scott College, Decatur, GA  
*All that is Holy*, Blue Mark Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2016 *The Garden of Unearthly Delights*, Whitespace Gallery, Atlanta, GA
- 2015 *Relics of Marriage*, Umbrella Arts Gallery, New York, NY (solo)  
*The Drawing Experiment*, Chastain Arts Gallery, Atlanta, GA  
*Metro Curates Invitational*, Umbrella Arts Gallery, New York, NY  
*Digital Picture Selects for ACP*, Mason Fine Art, Atlanta, GA
- 2012 *Relics of Marriage*, The Xchange Gallery at the Arts Exchange, Atlanta, GA (solo)
- 2011 *One Million Thoughts of Joy: Digital Art Installation*, I-85/75 and Williams Street Exit, Atlanta, GA (solo)
- 2010 *Via Dorso: Sonnets to Unguarded Moments*, Wm Turner Gallery, Atlanta, GA (solo)
- 2008 *X.U.M.E.*, Alexandria Museum of Art, Alexandria, LA (solo)
- 2007 *X.U.M.E.*, Wesleyan College, Macon, GA (solo)
- 2006 *Elyse Defoor*, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC (solo)
- 2005 *Soul Signatures*, The Granite Room, Atlanta, GA (solo)  
*Liquid*, Gallery Sklo, Atlanta, GA (solo)
- 2003 *Aerial Chaises*, National Juried Exhibition Emory Chairs Project Site installation, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia

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## Curatorial & Juror Experience

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*City of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs selection committee for public art*  
Atlanta, GA  
April, 2024

*"7th Biennial Alumni Art Exhibition"*  
University of West Georgia, Carrollton, GA  
August, 2021

*"Drag Queens & Club Kids—Al Clayton Photography"*  
Atlanta Celebrates Photography 2019  
EBD4, Chamblee, GA  
October, 2019

*"Loss. Redemption. Grace."*  
EBD4, Chamblee, GA  
June, 2019

*"SnowGlobe"*  
EBD4, Chamblee, GA  
November, 2018

*"40 over 40"*  
EBD4, Chamblee, GA  
November, 2017

Co-Chair at the Xchange Gallery  
The Arts Exchange, Atlanta, GA  
2012 – 2015

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## Residencies

The Hambidge Center  
2005 – 2008, 2010, 2024

Virginia Center for the Creative Arts  
2014

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## Education

Bachelor of Fine Arts  
University of Georgia  
Athens, Georgia

Advanced Painting  
Atlanta College of Art

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## Collections

- The Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia
- The New York Public Library
- Acoustic Headquarters, Dunwoody, Georgia
- Private collections throughout the United States, and in Singapore,

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## Publications

*Arts.ATL.org / Atlanta Journal-Constitution*  
Pearl McHaney  
6-3-2024  
"Sharing a Room with ArtsXchange Women"

*Buckhaven City Lifestyle*  
Sue G. Collins  
February 2024  
"Elyse Defoor's World"

*Arts.ATL.org*  
Jerry Cullum  
12-5-2022  
"Cullum's Notebook: Personal mythology in  
garter belts, tree stumps, Carolina blue"  
*The Art Institute of Atlanta*

*Arts.ATL.org*  
Candice Dyer  
7-1-2019  
"Loss. Redemption. Grace.' at EBD4  
responds artfully to human tragedies"

*Arts.ATL.org*  
Catherine Fox  
9-17-2016  
"The Garden of Unearthly Delights' rises to  
the occasion with love, humor and creativity at  
Whitespace Gallery"

*Washington.Post.com/news/the-fix/*  
Janell Ross  
8-29-2015  
"The art – and controversy –  
of Hurricane Katrina 'X-codes'"  
A story focusing on "Southern Spaces"  
photo essay curated by Dorothy Moye

*Arts.ATL.org*  
Dan Weiskopf  
7-28-2015  
"Twelve artists respond in diverse ways to  
'Drawing Experiment' at Chastain Gallery"

*Musée Magazine.com*  
Andrea Blanch  
5-7-2015  
"Elyse Defoor: Relics of Marriage at  
Umbrella Arts"

*Don't Take Pictures.com*  
Roger Thompson  
2-6-2015  
"The Evolution of Metro Show 2015"

*Arts.ATL.org*  
Jerry Cullum  
9-3-2014  
"Diverse group of female artists explore  
'Sense of Self' at Arts Exchange gallery"

*Burnaway.org*  
Meredith Kooi  
8-27-2014  
"Is Feminism a Dirty Word in Art?"  
*The Arts Exchange*

*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*  
David Lee Simmons  
8-8-2010  
"Reflecting on Katrina, 5 years later"  
*Spruill Gallery*

*Creative Loafing*  
Cinque Hicks  
8-3-2010  
"The fine line between meaningful art  
and disaster porn"  
*Spruill Gallery*

*ArtsCritic.ATL.com*  
Jerry Cullum  
2-22-2010  
"Elyse Defoor's classical turn at  
Wm Turner Gallery"

*Winston-Salem Journal*  
Tom Patterson  
3-12-2006  
"A Fascinating Crowd:..."  
*Wake Forest University*  
*Hanes Art Gallery*

*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*  
Jerry Cullum  
2-3-2005  
"Outside the Lines" *Granite Room*

*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*  
Catherine Fox  
1-30-2005  
"Group exhibit..." *Spruill Gallery*

*Emory Magazine*  
Mary J. Loftus  
Summer 2003  
"Chair & Chair Alike"

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## Podcast & Television

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*The Cultured Podcast*

9-16-2018

*"Elyse Defoor – Intimacy in Art"*

*WPBA 30 "This is Atlanta"*

10-27-2010

*"Elyse Defoor – X.U.M.E"*

*NBC Weekend Today*

8-28-2010

*"X Marks the Spot"*

*WXIA 11 Alive News*

8-28-2010

*"Gallery Marks Katrina Anniversary with 'X' "*

*WSB Channel 2 Action News*

8-26-2010

*"Gallery Marks Katrina Anniversary with 'X' "*