



The Jumpsuit Project: Hollywood

Thursday, June 22, 2017 4-10PM

Friday, June 23, 2017 12-6PM

North Carolina-based artist **Sherrill Roland** brings The Jumpsuit Project to Hollywood for two days only. Located outside the doors of LACE, Sherrill shares his personal story and engages in conversation about incarceration with passersby on Hollywood Boulevard.

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Sherrill Roland

Artist Statement

My name is Sherrill Roland and I create art that challenges ideas around controversial social and political constructs, and generate a safe space to process, question, and share. I'm originally from Asheville, NC and recently return to finish my education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The Jumpsuit Project is a socially engaged art project being conducted at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro during the 2016 – 2017 academic year. The primary purpose of the project is to raise awareness around issues related to incarceration. This work grows out of my personal history. In August 2012, I was issued a warrant in Washington DC explaining that I had four felony counts against me pending indictment. After nine months an indictment was never found and the felony charges were dropped to misdemeanors. In October 2013, I went to trial and lost, and 10 months later I was released from state prison. Almost a year and a half after being released, I was exonerated of all charges and granted my bill of innocence.

For more than three years, I was forced to relinquish control of my life – which is why The Jumpsuit Project is particularly personal to me. Returning to life outside of the prison walls, with my innocence restored was challenging. I encountered difficulties reentering society, like many incarcerated citizens. Attempts to repress and ignore the imprisonment experience, while common, were altogether unsuccessful and unproductive. I found liberation in sharing my story with family and friends, and discovered that others found a similar release when sharing their experiences in return. And thus, The Jumpsuit Project was born.

In an effort to ignite the conversation around issues related to incarceration, I will wear an orange jumpsuit every day until my graduation in the spring of 2017. Introducing an orange jumpsuit, an outlier in an otherwise familiar setting, challenges those who encounter it by encouraging them to address their own prejudices towards those incarcerated. This visual representation of incarceration will shed light on these issues and how those closely connected are affected.