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PRESS RELEASE – for additional information and images, please contact Paula Martiesian at 401-521-7634 or at roxie.rose@verizon.net. Attached image file: Photograph entitled *On the Wall* by David DeMelim.

The BankRI Galleries present:

BankRI North Kingstown Gallery presents: “A Day in Havana: Photographs by David DeMelim,” January 7 through April 6, 2016 at the North Kingstown branch of BankRI. The branch is located at 1140 Ten Rod Road in North Kingstown. Hours are Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, contact www.bankri.com or call 401 574-1330.

MEET THE ARTIST – DAVID DEMELIM

Route 295 didn't exist. There wasn't a strip mall in sight. A little boy who lived on a lake surrounded by apple orchards could get on his bike and go for a ride. And photographer David DeMelim did just that growing up in Apple Valley, a section of Johnston on the border of Smithfield, Rhode Island.

He came by his interest in photography naturally – his dad was a printmaker and his family enjoyed traveling and taking pictures. One day, DeMelim wandered into a junk shop that happened to have a box of cameras for sale. The cameras intrigued him and so, with his own money, he bought the assortment of cameras.



“The purchase of that collection, a large box of twenty or thirty cameras, opened up a whole variety of possibilities,” DeMelim recalls. It certainly set the young high schooler on a path lined with emulsion and images.

Although DeMelim originally attended the University of Rhode Island to study marine biology, he found himself taking art classes, primarily in photography and printmaking. “Pretty soon,” DeMelim says, “I had enough credits to graduate with a BFA.” He studied with the late photographer Bart Parker who DeMelim says, “focused on world view and vision rather than the technology of image making.”

The lessons stayed with him. After graduation DeMelim found that photo interns were expected to work for free. Unable to afford the entry level internships available to him, DeMelim took a job at a local trade printer. His career in printing took off as the industry transitioned from analog to digital systems. DeMelim found himself at the forefront of desktop publishing with access to equipment and technology not generally available to the public. He incorporated that knowledge and experience into his image making.

DeMelim continued to take photographs throughout his printmaking career and today he has left the field to concentrate on his photography. Not surprisingly, both his printmaking and photography experiences have merged into DeMelim's unique vision of the world.

DeMelim often uses high contrast imagery and strong singular colors to find and isolate his subjects. The results, abstracted

portraits and landscapes, are quite unlike the high dynamic range (HDR) photography so in vogue today.

The photographs of a recent trip to Cuba, displayed at the BankRI North Kingstown Gallery are not high contrast. Instead DeMelim simply recorded his experiences. The resulting photographs display both the grandeur and the decay of this beautiful country. The rich colors, unexpected architecture and sumptuous compositions practically sing out.

“I wanted to show the rich diversity [of Cuba],” DeMelim explains, “not just the old cars. It was such a fascinating place, full of contradictions and unexpected juxtapositions. With so much to see and discover it was hard to focus on any one thing for very long, a true case of visual overload ... rich colors, textures and patterns with everything in motion, even the buildings.”

The BankRI Galleries are curated by Paula Martiesian, a Providence-based artist and arts advocate.