

NEWS RELEASE



Montclair Art Museum
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NEW DIRECTIONS
A new series of contemporary art exhibitions

Digital Images and Related Information Available for Download at montclairartmuseum.org/press

For Immediate Release

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**THE MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM PRESENTS
*MARINA ZURKOW: FRIENDS, ENEMIES, AND OTHERS***

Exhibition Launches New Directions Series

On View September 17, 2011–January 8, 2012

Marina Zurkow's art examines our complicated and often perilous relationship to the natural environment. Working primarily in digital animation, she draws upon both new media and traditional fine arts techniques to create videos and works on paper that are at once lyrical and discomfiting, whimsical and profound.

Alexandra Schwartz, MAM Curator of Contemporary Art

MONTCLAIR, NJ, August 18, 2011—The Fall 2011 season at the Montclair Art Museum (MAM) will mark the launch of New Directions, a series of solo exhibitions of contemporary artists inaugurated by MAM's new curator of contemporary art, Alexandra Schwartz. The first in this series will present the work of media artist and 2011 Guggenheim Fellow Marina Zurkow. Titled *Marina Zurkow: Friends, Enemies, and Others*, it will run from September 17 through January 8. The exhibition presents the world premiere of Zurkow's *Friends and Enemies*, and will include five digital animation videos, two of which will be screened on the Museum's grounds, and 16 works on paper.

Zurkow makes psychological narratives about humans and their relationship to animals, plants, and the weather. These take the form of multichannel videos, customized multiscreen computer pieces, animated cartoons, interactive mobile works, and pop objects.

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The first portion of the exhibition showcases the series *Crossing the Waters* (2006–09), digital animations that explore oceanic environments and climate change. The four-part video *Elixir* (2007–09), parts III and IV of which will be screened on the Museum’s grounds, shows figures trapped in floating bottles, highlighting the paradoxical violence and tranquility of the oceans. *Weights and Measures* (2007) examines how animals, plants, and machines play radically different ecological roles. *Slurb* (2009), commissioned by the city of Tampa, imagines that city as an underwater, post-apocalyptic world.



Marina Zurkow,
Mesocosm
(Northumberland
UK), Winter, 2011.
Archival pigment
print. Courtesy the
artist.

The centerpiece of the exhibition, from the series *Friends and Enemies*, comprises a 146-hour-long video and related prints. The digital animation *Mesocosm (Northumberland UK)* chronicles the changes that occur over a year on the moors of Northumberland, England; one minute of screen time equals one hour of real time. Seasons unfold, snows fall, days pass, moons rise, and animals come and go around the omnipresent man in the garden, which is based on a painting by Lucian Freud of the British fashion designer and performer Leigh Bowery. The action in the landscape is determined by computer code, which randomly generates its order and frequency; no cycle is identical to the last. *Mesocosm (Northumberland, UK): Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn* (2011) consists of four digital prints based on video stills, while *Heraldic Crests for Invasive Species* (2011) comprises 12 letterpress prints describing some of the major invasive (non-native) species of Northern England, several of which appear in the video. Based on traditional crests, each imaginary coat of arms reveals information about the animal’s country of origin; its introduction into England; and its victories, allies, and enemies. With these works, Zurkow seeks to spur a conversation around the relationship between nativist views toward invasives and anti-immigrant rhetoric.

Since 2000, MARINA ZURKOW has exhibited at The Sundance Film Festival, The Rotterdam Film Festival, Res Fest, Ars Electronica, Creative Time, The Kitchen, The Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Walker Art Center, The Brooklyn Museum, The National Museum for Women in the Arts, and Eyebeam, among other venues. Her videos have been broadcast on MTV, FujiTV, and PBS. She is a 2011 Guggenheim Fellow, a 2005 NYFA

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Fellow, a 2003 Rockefeller New Media Fellow, and a 2001 Creative Capital grantee. She teaches at New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP), and lives in Brooklyn.

ALEXANDRA SCHWARTZ was recently appointed curator of contemporary art at the Montclair Art Museum, where she is inaugurating the New Directions series, and planning a major traveling exhibition, *New Order: Art and Politics in the 1990s*, opening at MAM in Fall 2013. Before her appointment she was the coordinator of The Museum of Modern Art's Modern Women's Project; in this role she was the co-editor of *Modern Women: Women Artists at The Museum of Modern Art* (2010) and curator of *Mind and Matter: Alternative Abstractions, 1940 to Now* and *Modern Women: Single Channel* at MoMA PS1. She is also the author of *Ed Ruscha's Los Angeles* (MIT Press, 2010) and the editor of a collection of Ruscha's writings, *Leave Any Information at the Signal: Writings, Interviews, Bits, Pages* (MIT Press, 2002). A contributor to various journals, anthologies, and exhibition catalogs, she has taught at Columbia University and the University of Michigan, and in the Education Departments at MoMA and The Whitney Museum of American Art and has lectured widely. She received a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan and a B.A. from Harvard University.

Exhibition Opening

The exhibition will open with a free outdoor community celebration on Saturday, September 17, 5–7:30 p.m. (rain date: Sunday, September 18, 4–6:30 p.m.). A nature-inspired soundtrack will be provided by Zach Layton. Family activities will be provided and food and drink will be available for purchase.

Public Program

Artist Tour and Conversation with Marina Zurkow

Tuesday, November 8, 7 p.m.

\$10 Members, \$15 nonmembers

FREE for MSU staff and students

Limited to 25 participants

Marina Zurkow and Alexandra Schwartz, MAM's curator of contemporary art, will lead a tour of the exhibition, followed by a Q&A.

Group Tours

Group tours may be booked by calling 973-259-5136 or by emailing tours@montclairartmuseum.org.

Online Press Site

The Museum will maintain a site dedicated to the exhibition for journalists seeking further information, including a checklist and images. Please visit montclairartmuseum.org and click on For the Media.

Online Video

You may view a 30-second digital preview featuring Marina Zurkow's animation *Mesocosm* either on the MAM website at <http://www.montclairartmuseum.org/marinazurkow/> or on the MAM YouTube channel at <http://youtu.be/wi405Wkgats>.

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Visit Montclair

For more Montclair experiences, visit websites for the Montclair Center Business Improvement District (www.montclaircenter.com/) and Destination Montclair (www.destinationmontclair.com).

Sponsorship

Marina Zurkow: Friends, Enemies, and Others is made possible with generous Exhibition Angel support from the Vance Wall Foundation, Rose and John Cali, Tracy Higgins and James Leitner, Karen and Larry Mandelbaum, and Margo and Frank Walter.

About the Museum

The Montclair Art Museum, a notable, community-based institution with an international reputation, boasts a renowned collection of American and Native American art that uniquely highlights art making in the United States over the last three hundred years. The collection includes more than 12,000 objects: paintings, prints, original works on paper, photographs, and sculpture by American artists from the 18th century to the present, as well as traditional and contemporary Native American art and artifacts representing the cultural developments of peoples from all of the major American Indian regions. The Museum's education programs serve a wide public and bring artists, performers, and scholars to the Museum on a regular basis. MAM's Yard School of Art is the leading regional art school, offering a multitude of comprehensive courses for children, teens, adults, seniors, and professional artists.

The Montclair Art Museum is located at 3 South Mountain Avenue in Montclair, N.J. Information and directions are available on the Museum website, montclairartmuseum.org, or by calling 973-746-5555. MAM is open Wednesdays through Sundays, Noon – 5 p.m., and closed on Mondays, Tuesdays, and major holidays. Museum admission is \$12 for nonmember adults, \$10 for senior citizens and students with I.D., and free for members and children under 12.

All Museum programs are made possible, in part, by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Vance Wall Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and Museum Members.

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