

University Art Museum UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

February 1, 2017



Nelson Rockefeller addresses museum visitors at the inaugural exhibition, 1967



The Diaristic Impulse, 2013
Installation view

University Art Museum, UAlbany Turns 50

The University at Albany Art Museum is proud to mark fifty years of presenting the work of contemporary artists with a timely roster of exhibitions. When it opened in 1967, the University Art Museum was the largest space for exhibitions of contemporary art in the Capital Region. Designed by Edward Durrell Stone, the museum's 9,000-square-foot facility was described in the *Albany Times Union* as an "enormous, lofty room" marked by "grand, fenestral walls and tall pilasters," which dictated a "feeling of freedom and space and the breaking down of barriers."

The museum's inaugural exhibition was *Painting and Sculpture from the Nelson A. Rockefeller Collection* and featured fifty-three artworks by some of the most influential figures in twentieth-century modern art, including Braque, Calder, de Kooning, Klee, Miro, Marisol, Nevelson, and Picasso. Governor Rockefeller's view of the importance of having a contemporary art museum that "presents new ideas through art and culture" remains the museum's guiding principle today.

The University Art Museum has continued to expand upon its legacy and its founding ideals each year. In 2017 it will present a range of exhibitions that include one-person shows by Conor

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UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM

University at Albany, 1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222
Phone: 518-442-4035 Fax: 518-442-5075 E-Mail: museum@albany.edu

Backman, Dave McKenzie, Sara Greenberger Rafferty, and Cameron Martin; the annual Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition; and *When We Were Young: Rethinking Abstraction from the University at Albany Art Collections (1967–present)*.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY ART MUSEUM

Recognized as an icon of late twentieth-century Modernist architecture, the museum's mission is to advance knowledge and foster understanding of the contemporary visual arts. Through exhibitions, programs, publications, and collections, the museum seeks to provide a forum for artists and audiences that enriches the intellectual life of both the university and the community. Since 1967, the museum has presented over 400 exhibitions of the work of emerging artists, as well as those of regional, national, or international reputation.

The University Art Museum is part of the dynamic learning environment at the University at Albany, State University of New York, an internationally recognized public research institution with a broad mission of undergraduate and graduate education, research, and service. More than 18,000 students are enrolled at the university, which is located in New York's Capital Region. In addition to being one of the most visible cultural presenters on campus, the museum plays a leadership role in the regional arts community.

2017 EXHIBITIONS

Conor Backman: A Clock and Map Minute

February 2 – April 1, 2017

Conor Backman's first solo museum exhibition features paintings, assemblages, and sculptures completed within the last five years. Lushly depicted fruit trees, tinted glass panels, cast-resin orange peels, and cross-sectioned paint cans all play a role in Backman's deft investigations into the history of materiality and illusionistic space in realist painting. His most recent paintings, while rooted in the romantic natural world of the nineteenth-century Hudson River School, include ready-made elements that disrupt the picture plane with contemporary concerns related to perception and the idea that we live in a world made newly flat through unlimited access to information.

Dave McKenzie: An Intermission

February 2 – April 1, 2017

Known for his multi-disciplinary performances, sculptures, and videos, Dave McKenzie is a keen observer of the ways in which larger truths are embedded in words and images from everyday life. Are images still powerful? What is the role of the individual in the social body? McKenzie believes that no matter how saturated we are by images, they remain an invaluable tool for the historian, student, artist, and activist to address basic questions about our place in the world. *An Intermission* features a newly conceived project in the form of translucent banners. Based on archival and contemporary sources, the banners publicly address the re-reading and re-interpretation of images in the wake of recent social and political events. McKenzie's wide-reaching dissection of contemporary culture is further demonstrated in five recent videos, in which Henry Kissinger, Queen Nefertiti, Dora the Explorer, and a life-size Andy Warhol doll all make appearances.

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Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition

May 5 – 21, 2017

Opening Reception: Friday, May 12, 5–7 p.m.

The *Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition* features work produced by candidates for the University at Albany Art Department's three-year, sixty-credit-hour program of intensive training and study in traditional and contemporary fine art practices.

Cameron Martin: Abstracts

June 30 – September 9, 2017

Cameron Martin is best known for his large-scale, photographically based landscape paintings. For years, his paintings centered on investigating various modes of representation and seriality in relationship to images of nature. In 2015, he began working against this approach, returning to earlier elements that he felt were missing in his recent studio practice. This led to a re-engaged sense of play and the freedom to entertain productive failure. A new body of non-objective paintings emerged, which addresses current generative roles for abstraction. Each of the new paintings maintains a distinct optical and conceptual addition to an expanded framework. Says Martin, "I often think of the paintings as operating the way a community ideally could, with strong individuals working in tandem, finding affinities but also antagonizing each other in order to produce something larger."

Sara Greenberger Rafferty: Gloves Off

June 30 – September 9, 2017

Bringing together recent video, sculpture, and photography, Rafferty furthers her ongoing fascination with domesticity, the body, consumer culture, fashion, violence, and stand-up comedy in a kaleidoscopic view of contemporary culture on the edge. Organized by The Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at SUNY New Paltz and curated by scholar and independent curator Andrew Ingall, *Gloves Off* is Sara Greenberger Rafferty's first comprehensive United States solo exhibition. The exhibition opens at The Dorsky in January 2017 and travels to the University Art Museum, where Rafferty will present a new site-determined installation.

When We Were Young: Rethinking Abstraction from the University at Albany Art Collections (1967–present)

October – December 2017

Looking back at pieces from the earliest years of the University at Albany Art Collections, this exhibition gives a fresh perspective on late-Modernist abstraction as it relates to current trends in contemporary art. Artists include Josef Albers, Richard Anuszkiewicz, Jack Bosson, Alexander Calder, Chryssa, Gene Davis, Adolph Gottlieb, Sam Francis, Helen Frankenthaler, Donald Judd, Ellsworth Kelly, Jenny Kemp, Kim Lim, Conrad Marca-Relli, Robert Motherwell, Henry Pearson, Tim Rollins and K.O.S., George Sugarman, Peter Taylor, and Jack White.

My Beloved

October – December 2017

The exhibit features videos by two generations of artists whose examination of issues surrounding race, gender, violence, and sexuality has been influenced by Toni Morrison's layered and visceral imagery. The exhibit will be held in conjunction with a Toni Morrison Symposium to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of her novel *Beloved*, which received the 1987 Pulitzer Prize and was published when Morrison held the Albert Schweitzer Chair at the University at Albany (1984–87). The project is a collaboration of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and English Departments, and the New York State Writers Institute.

For more information, call (518) 442-4035 or visit our website at www.albany.edu/museum

Museum Hours: Tuesday 10 am – 8 pm; Wednesday through Friday, 10 am – 5 pm; Sat, noon – 4 pm.

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