

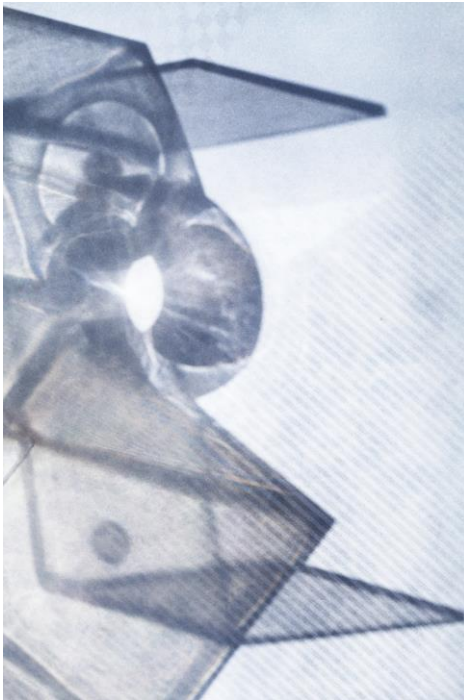
MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
April 8, 2015
Contact: Jodi Joseph
Director of Communications
413.664.4481 x8113
jjoseph@massmoca.org

Artists' Choice: An Expanded Field of Photography

Liz Deschenes curates group exhibition featuring six artists with wide-ranging approaches to the field of photography



Miranda Lichtenstein
Last Exit, 2015
Archival pigment print, 50 x 33.3 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Elizabeth Dee, New York

North Adams, Massachusetts — In conjunction with her solo exhibition at MASS MoCA, **Liz Deschenes** curates a group exhibition featuring six artists whose work expands the field of photography. **Dana Hoey, Miranda Lichtenstein, Craig Kalpakjian, Josh Tonsfeldt, Sara VanDerBeek, and Randy West** will be represented by a combination of new and existing work (chosen, for the most part, by the artists themselves), which demonstrates the wide-ranging approaches to their art. Several of the featured artists make work that is considered photographic but is camera-less. For others, photography has laid the groundwork for the moving image or functions as a jumping-off point for sculptural investigations. With this small but diverse selection of artists, the exhibition provokes an open-ended dialogue on the state of photography as an increasingly diversified medium that intersects and informs other fields of art making. The exhibition opens with a reception on **May 23, 2015**.

Though the artists were selected for their individual strengths without any thematic restraints, commonalities emerge when their works are considered as a group. Each artist offers a new perspective on the fundamental properties and processes of photography — be they formal, mechanical, or conceptual. Light, depth, and pattern are examined and re-thought, as are support and frame. The

MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

medium's traditional associations with mimetic representation, the male gaze, and reproducibility are also challenged. Many of the artists share Deschenes' interest in architecture and the sculptural potential of photography — either creating an image of three-dimensional space, such as the work of Kalpakjian, or with the incorporation of sculpture into their practice, as in the works of both Tonsfeldt and VanDerBeek.

All of the artists engage with a number of pictorial traditions, influenced by predecessors ranging from Josef Albers and Sol LeWitt to Man Ray and László Moholy-Nagy. Like many of the artists in the exhibition, these antecedents worked in multiple mediums and pushed the boundaries of photography through their embrace of experimentation and new technologies. Finally, the featured artists frequently undermine the assumption that photography's power lies in its ability to enhance visibility; instead their works often conceal, obscure, and confuse viewers' perceptions of reality as well as expectations of image-making.

Dana Hoey

Dana Hoey's photographs often address the problematics of representing the female figure. At MASS MoCA Hoey will debut *Fighters* (2014), a four-channel video installation, starring American kickboxer Alex Stagi and former professional Muay Thai fighter Kru Natalie Fuz, in three two-minute sparring rounds (staged with the help of fight choreographer Joe Falanga). Projected on four walls in a room that mimics the tight, square shape of a boxing ring, the video situates the viewer in the center of the fight. As the dizzying action travels across the walls, the viewer's position embodies the shifting camera angles. Disrupting the conventional notion of objective perception, the moving camera and multiple, moving viewpoints will also convey the profound sensory complexity of the art of fighting. Hoey calls the work "a feminist proposition and an utterly pragmatic investigation of female power."

Miranda Lichtenstein

Working with a wide range of subjects, Lichtenstein's smart and seductive photographs bring a sense of wonder to the act of looking, transforming the real into something unexpected. The artist will present five works from her ongoing series "Screen Shadows" (begun 2010) as well as the video *Danse Serpentine (doubled and refracted)*, 2010. The "Screen Shadows" picture everyday objects from vases to kitchen gadgets, silhouetted and obscured by an array of papers, which act as a filter between the

MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

camera and object. The flattening effect of these paper screens, which blur foreground and background, creates enigmatic compositions which are often reminiscent of Man Ray's experimental Rayographs. Lichtenstein looked directly to an early avant-garde work for inspiration with *Danse Serpentine (doubled and refracted)*. In this video, she manipulates Louis Lumière's hand-tinted 1896 film of the modern dance and lighting pioneer Loie Fuller whose improvised movements and rippling silk robes created a hypnotic synthesis of music, dance, and image. Lichtenstein recorded a projection of the original (sourced from YouTube) along with a second projection that was reflected off a mylar screen. The artist presents the video on a black curtain, which references the black theatrical fabric seen behind Fuller and further dissolves the dancer's image into a ghostly reverie of light, color, and movement.

Craig Kalpakjian

Many of Craig Kalpakjian's works present spatial conundrums, illusions of three dimensions which confuse inside and outside, artifice and reality. The two large ink-jet images in the exhibition, printed on a heavy photo paper, present a partial grid of squares that register between deep, dark black and modulated shades of grey. In one of the works, two hazy, circular forms bring to mind the flash of a camera and also give the impression that behind the flat picture plane are two glowing lights and a boundless distance. The slightly puzzling geometries of the works grew out of two of the artist's earlier series, one influenced by Josef Albers' "Homage to the Square" and the other a group of digitally rendered images of shadowy, architectural spaces. Those enigmatic images of imagined corridors and corners devoid of people share with the new works a similarly unsettling sense of place. Kalpakjian's interest in Modernist architecture, minimalism, cinema, and the psychology of space intersect in these haunting and seductive works which seem to exist between multiple mediums. Printed on paper, attached to linen, and stretched like a canvas, the computer-generated works reference both painting and photography.

Josh Tonsfeldt

Josh Tonsfeldt's practice is rooted in the everyday and the accumulation of small gestures that build a larger narrative. He moves easily between mediums without hierarchy, and his photographs, sculptures, and videos develop very naturally out of the images and materials of the artist's daily life. His photographs have an intimate, almost unintentional quality, as well as a sensitivity to composition, line,

MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

color, and dimension. The spatial complexity apparent in many of his two-dimensional images and their references to screens, windows, reflections, and other filters translates easily to Tonsfeldt's sculpture and his engagement with the space outside the photograph in general and with the spaces where the work is exhibited in particular. His installation at MASS MoCA will include a selection of photographic works and a sculpture built for the gallery which will play off those images and the materials involved in their production, storage, and presentation. Deconstructing those mechanisms, Tonsfeldt creates work which isolates, emphasizes, or disrupts both analog and digital components of the medium, including the frame, and materials such as printer inks, photographic papers, and the optical films used in LCD screens.

Sara VanDerBeek

At MASS MoCA Sara VanDerBeek presents a group of new works, including photographs and two cast-concrete sculptures, which are influenced by the museum's history as a producer of printed and dyed fabrics. *Balanced Cloth*, 2015, features an image of a layered, loose, grid-like mesh that the artist printed on fabric and wraps on an open frame reminiscent of a simple loom. *Lace Shadows*, 2015, captures shadows cast by a thin piece of tatting lace that the artist's great-aunt made and preserved among only a few possessions when she immigrated to America from Denmark. Interested in women's extensive history with textiles, VanDerBeek connects the lace shadows rising and fading from the dusky blue light in her images with the intermingling of past and present, a continuum connecting generations of women who have played important roles in the livelihood of their families, from Ancient Greece to the Industrial Revolution. Working simultaneously in two and three dimensions, VanDerBeek draws attention to the differences and intersections between the experience of image and object and what she has called "the transformative quality of photography... which can affect your sense of time, place, memory, and scale..."

Randy West

Randy West distills his subjects into minimal gestures of line, form, and texture. Providing unexpected representations of common objects ranging from bird nests to fabric to crumpled photographic paper, West often provides a deeper look at the details of his subjects while pushing their image to the edge of abstraction. At MASS MoCA West will exhibit *Edge of the Cloud* (2011), a grid of thirty ink-jet prints, which, like many of West's works, were created by digitally scanning an object into the computer,

MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

eliminating the camera and traditional film processes. West scanned a single sheet of paper thirty times; each resulting print contains subtle shadows and marks caused by the handling of the paper over time, as well as a black border created by the scanner's light bleeding around the edge of the paper. When viewed from a distance, the thirty images give the overall impression of a single, pale-gray cloud. The work brings up associations of the internet "cloud" as well as Alfred Stieglitz's well-known series of cloud images from the 1920s, titled *Equivalents*, which, like West's images, are often devoid of recognizable referents and walk the line between representation and abstraction. West further complicates this relationship by making images which have a 1:1 correlation between the original and its representation.

About the Artists

Born in San Francisco in 1966, **Dana Hoey** received a BA in philosophy from Wesleyan University in 1989 and a MFA in photography from Yale University in 1997. She has exhibited internationally at venues including the Liverpool Biennial, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and P.S. 1, New York; and has had notable solo exhibitions at the University Art Museum at the University of Albany; the Center for Art, Design, and Visual Culture at the University of Maryland Baltimore County; and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC. Her work is included in the collections of the Hirshhorn Museum, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Pérez Art Museum Miami; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, among others. Hoey is represented by Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York. She lives and works in upstate New York.

Miranda Lichtenstein was born in New York in 1969. She received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College in 1990 and an MFA from California Institute of the Arts in 1993. Her work has been exhibited at Hermès, New York; the Contemporary Austin (formerly AMOA-Arthouse); the Suburban, Oak Park, Illinois; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. In 2002, she participated in the Residency Program and Fellowship at the Claude Monet Foundation in Giverny, France. Her work can be found in the collections of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York; and the Baltimore

MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

Museum of Art, among others. Lichtenstein is represented by Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn.

Born in 1961 in Huntington, New York, **Craig Kalpakjian** has a BA in art history from the University of Pennsylvania. His work has been shown at the Gebert Foundation in Rapperswil-Jona, Switzerland; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; SculptureCenter, New York; the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. His work is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, among others. Kalpakjian currently lives and works in New York City.

Josh Tonsfeldt was born in Independence, Missouri, in 1979. He earned a BA from SUNY Purchase College in 2004 and an MFA from Columbia University in 2007. He has exhibited widely over the past decade. He recently completed projects at Rowhouse Projects in Baltimore, Maryland, and Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Bergamo, Bergamo, Italy. His work has also been seen at the Elizabeth Foundation, New York; Serpentine Galleries, London; White Columns, New York; Sculpture Center, New York; and The Kitchen, New York. Tonsfeldt is represented by Simon Preston Gallery, New York. He currently lives and works in New York City.

Sara VanDerBeek, born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1976, earned a BFA from the Cooper Union in 1998. Recent projects include a solo exhibition at Cleveland Museum of Contemporary Art, and participation in the 12th Bienal de Cuenca, Ecuador. Her work has also been exhibited at the UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Her work is included in the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, among others. Forthcoming projects include solo exhibitions at the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam and the Baltimore Museum of Art. VanDerBeek is represented by the approach, London; Altman Siegel Gallery in San Francisco; and Metro Pictures in New York. She currently lives and works in New York City.

MASS MoCA

NEWS RELEASE

Born in Indianapolis in 1960, **Randy West** received an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia in 1986. His work has been exhibited at the George Eastman House, Rochester; Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida; Aperture Foundation, New York; Queens Museum, New York; Houston Center for Photography, Houston; The International Center of Photography, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego. His work is included in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona; US Federal Reserve, Washington, D.C., and the Aaron Siskind Foundation, New York, among others. West is represented by Bruce Silverstein Gallery, New York. West splits his time between New York City and the Catskills.

Images

A collection of high-resolution images is available here: bit.ly/1OBdOu7.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. Hundreds of works of visual and performing art have been created on its 19th-century factory campus during fabrication and rehearsal residencies, making MASS MoCA among the most productive sites in the country for the creation and presentation of new art. More platform than box, MASS MoCA strives to bring to its audiences art experiences that are fresh, engaging, and transformative.

MASS MoCA's galleries are open 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays. The Hall Art Foundation's Anselm Kiefer reopens April 18, 2015. Gallery admission is \$18 for adults, \$16 for veterans and seniors, \$12 for students, \$8 for children 6 to 16, and free for children 5 and under. Members are admitted free year-round. For additional information, call 413.662.2111 x1 or visit massmoca.org.