

UC SANTA BARBARA

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UCSB's Art, Design & Architecture Museum Presents an Exhibition of Contemporary Art

The Art, Design & Architecture Museum at UC Santa Barbara presents "The Stumbling Present: Ruins in Contemporary Art," an exhibition of contemporary works of art that examine the haunting rendering of ruins. The exhibition opens Friday, October 12, and continues through January 20, 2013.

Curated by Elyse A. Gonzales, the museum's curator of exhibitions, "The Stumbling Present" features artists who paint abandoned buildings, picture dystopic cityscapes, document deserted homes, highlight entropic processes, and craft decaying installations. In portraying these places and objects in a state of decrepitude, these artists highlight the dynamic nature of ruins as a crossroads of alternating time frames: present condition, imagined past, and speculative future. By harnessing this imagery, they express personal and societal concerns related to the times in which we live. Indeed, "The Stumbling Present" is a reflection of the sense of instability and even decay that has characterized the world in a period marked by global terrorism, ecological distress, economic chaos, and political instability.

"In 'The Stumbling Present,' I focused on themes of obsolescence and memory, failure, and transformation," said Gonzales. The passage of time is inherent to the subject, with one example being Valerie Hegarty's large-scale installation, "Ship, Wallpaper, and Floorboards with Flood Damage," which the artist will create on site.

Cuban-born artist Carlos Garaicoa grew up in a society that was physically decaying, and his work uses ruination as a means of addressing the failure of the government's idealistic goals. Dutch artist Rob Voerman depicts the failure of modernism as an architectural movement in his installation, "Building a New Millennium," which he will construct in the museum's entrance gallery. In contrast, Portuguese artist Carlos Bunga views ruins as neither bad nor good, but rather a state of transformation making way for new growth. "Drawings Ruins Project," a series of 16 works on paper, highlights the impermanent nature of our built environment.

Although ruins play a large role in the history of art, few exhibitions on the topic have focused entirely on contemporary art. The exhibition title comes from a description of photographer and participating artist Simryn Gill's series "Standing Still," which documents the ruins of Malaysian buildings following the country's economic collapse in the 1990's.

The international group exhibition features 10 artists, and will include drawings, film, installations, paintings, photographs, sculptures, and videos. The works will be installed

throughout the museum, with commissions and loans from artists, galleries, and collectors in Europe, New York, Los Angeles, and Texas. In addition, the exhibition will be documented by a 150-page catalog, to be printed after the show opens, and will feature installation shots, two scholarly essays, and artist biographies.

The following artists are represented in the exhibition:

- Lara Almarcegui (b. 1972, Zaragoza, Spain; lives Rotterdam, Netherlands)
- Carlos Bunga (b.1976, Porto, Portugal; lives Barcelona, Spain)
- Nigel Cooke (b. 1973, Manchester, England; lives London)
- Adam Cvijanovic (b. 1959, Boston; lives New York City)
- Carlos Garaicoa (b. 1967, Havana, Cuba; lives Madrid, Spain and Havana, Cuba)
- Simryn Gill (b. 1959, Singapore; lives Sydney, Australia)
- Valerie Hegarty (b. 1967, Burlington, Vermont; lives in New York City)

- Kristin Morgin (b. 1968, Brunswick, GA; lives Los Angeles)
- Melanie Smith (b.1965, Poole, England; lives Mexico City)
- Rob Voerman (b. 1966, Deventer, Netherlands; lives Arnhem, Netherlands)

Selected participating artists will discuss their work during the opening reception, which will take place on Friday, October 12, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

A series of programs and events will complement the exhibition. Among them is "Ruinophilia," a companion exhibition of works from the museum's permanent collection that depict images of destruction and decay. It will be at the museum's space at the Jane Deering Gallery through December 16, 2012.

A companion film series will include "Persistence" by Daniel Eisenberg, who will present the film; and "The Island President" by Jon Shenk, who will introduce his film.

The exhibition is made possible by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Ceil & Michael E. Pulitzer Foundation, Inc.; Marcia and John Mike Cohen; The Mondriaan Fund, Amsterdam; and The Netherland-America Foundation.

The Art, Design & Architecture Museum at UCSB is open Wednesday through Sunday, from noon to 5 p.m. Admission is free. The Jane Deering Gallery, located at 128 E. Canon Perdido St. in Santa Barbara, is open Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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