

ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART



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Media Contacts:
Kirsten Schmidt (949) 759-1122 | kschmidt@ocma.net
Jean Oelrich (949) 759-1122 | joelrich@ocma.net

Chief Curator Dan Cameron organizes series of collection highlights in thought-provoking rotations throughout OCMA's 50th anniversary

Pairings: The Collection at 50
February 29–December 30, 2012



Joan Brown, *The Journey #5*, 1976; enamel on canvas
Collection OCMA, museum purchase with additional funds provided by the National Endowment for the Arts

NEWPORT BEACH, CA—For its 50th anniversary, the Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA) is showcasing its permanent collection in a series of twelve installations, each lasting between two and six weeks. To stimulate discussion within the museum's audience around the works' historical and aesthetic meanings, more than fifty works by twenty-four artists who are included in OCMA's collection will be juxtaposed in combinations that run against the grain of their typical generational and/or stylistic affinities. Artists familiar from the 1960s are contrasted with those who have emerged over the past ten years, painters are paired with video artists, abstraction gets re-joined with representation, and conceptual art pioneers will meet their post-conceptual successors. Featured artists include Joan Brown, Joe Goode, Walead Beshty, Llyn Foulkes, Charles Ray, Chris Burden, Daniel J. Martinez, John McCracken, and Lewis Baltz, among others. The rotations will run February 29 through December 30, 2012.

According to Chief Curator Dan Cameron, "Following the tremendous success of the Pacific Standard Time exhibitions in re-establishing the history of California's rise as a center for modern and contemporary art, it seems like an apt moment to de-historicize some of the work, curatorially speaking, and take a look at how other meanings start to emerge when, for example, you show side by side art by Rachel Lachowitz and John McCracken.'

Rotation Schedule for *Pairings: The Collection at 50*

Eija-Liisa Ahtila + Joan Brown

February 29–March 11

The 2001 video installation, *The Present*, by Finnish artist Eija-Liisa Ahtila (b. 1959), is made up of five human dramas, each with its own channel, constituting a unified if idiosyncratic narrative based on extensive interviews Ahtila conducted with individual women, in which the participants discussed their personal experiences of psychological fragility. Ahtila's video is presented in conjunction with two early paintings by Joan Brown (1938-1990), who lived and worked in northern California, and whose art explores themes of spiritual journey and transformation.

Joe Goode + Amanda Ross-Ho

March 14–25

OCMA owns several paintings by seminal southern California artist Joe Goode, covering a vital period in his work from the early 1960s to the late 1970s. A basic theme of rupture is indicated in many of these works through the image of a tear in the sky or picture-plane. In Amanda Ross-Ho's 2008 photo-work, *New Seizure 2*, photographs of drugs seized as contraband are displayed on hand-drilled sheetrock, lending a rough realism to conventional images of smuggling and law enforcement, and reinforcing the way each system complements the other.

Manny Farber + Joan Semmel

March 28–April 8

Two of the most influential figurative painters to emerge in the U.S. during the 1970s, Farber (1917-2008) and Semmel (b. 1932) developed their careers on opposite coasts, and do not appear to have ever exhibited their works together. Both artists had backgrounds as abstract expressionists in the 1950s, and both played significant roles in the resurgence of figurative works in their respective communities, and are represented here by uncharacteristically large paintings: Farber's 1983 *Have a Chew on Me* and Semmel's 1977 *Renoir Revisited*.

Lewis Baltz + Yoshua Okon

April 11-22

In Baltz's (b. 1945) landmark 1974 photographic series, *The New Industrial Parks Near Irvine, California*, the process of dividing topography into housing subdivisions is documented in seemingly objective style. In his *Coyoteria* installation, Mexican artist Okon (b. 1970) has recreated a well-known Joseph Beuys performance, in which he interacts with the "coyote," dressed in a flashy suit, but growling and otherwise taking on the mannerisms of his animal counterpart. Both works examine man's relationship to nature, while also addressing issues of class, corruption, and the subjugation of man by man.

Edgar Arceneaux + Llyn Foulkes

April 25–May 6

The vitality of gesture in drawing and painting is central to the combination of these two artists' works. Arceneaux (b. 1972) is a native Los Angeles painter whose work is often experienced as a form of extended meditation on the fleeting nature of the present and the function of memory. His large 2008 construction of a drawing and glass tripod invites the viewer to try which determine which of the two elements constitutes the work's essence. Foulkes (b. 1934) is one of the pivotal figures of 1960s Los Angeles painting, whose characteristic style incorporates fragments of Americana seen through the lens of an increasingly disaffected social satirist.

Robert Irwin + Charles Ray

May 16–June 27

An underlying principle of reductivism links the work of Irwin (b. 1928), one of pioneers of the 'light and space' movement in southern California during the 1960s, and Ray (b. 1953), whose enigmatic sculptures began to confound viewers' sense of perception beginning in the late 1980s. Irwin's two major works in the OCMA collection, a 1969 untitled 'disc' painting, and a 12-foot 1970 abstraction, will be in visual dialogue with two important early Ray sculptures, his 1986 *Ink Box* and his 1990 *Self Portrait*, in an effort to explore the possibility of common ground between two artists whose works are generally thought of as belonging to two separate critical traditions.

Chris Burden + Sean Duffy

July 5–22

Although Burden (b. 1946) has long been celebrated as one of the most uncompromising performance artists of the 1970s, much of his work possesses a playful side that is brought to the fore in this contrast with Duffy (b. 1966), whose work often emphasizes the more freeform aspects of the backyard inventor. Burden's sculptural mini-epic *Large Glass Ship*, a 1983 sculpture that fuses the concepts of play and war, and his legendary 1971 *TV Hijack* performance, are played off against Duffy's *Horizontal Mobile*, a 2004 suspended work using album covers to illustrate the solar system, and the 2009 *The Void*, which counter-intuitively channels wind power from 20 electric fans.

George Herms + Roland Reiss

August 1–19

Expanding upon the definition of assemblage as an accumulation of fragmented elements comes is the underlying premise of this pairing of Herms (b. 1935) one of southern California pioneering modernists and a longtime creator of Dada-inflected sculptures and pictures, with Reiss (b. 1929), who, despite his background as a painter, created in the 1970s and 1980s a series of miniature box sculptures depicting scenes from everyday life. While the oeuvres of the two men do not at first glance reveal obvious similarities, their shared interest in the artwork as a microcosm of the outer world, literally overflowing with an abundance of meaningful details, suggests a deeper link between these disparate practices.

Glenn Ligon + Daniel J. Martinez

September 4–October 7

In Ligon's (b. 1960) formative 1992 painting, *Prisoner of Love #4*, a single phrase is repeated across dozens of vertical rows of stenciled letters: "When I said that we were the ink that gives the white paper meaning that was too easy an image." The phrase, from Jean Genet's memoir, becomes a cypher for how marginal identities can be expressed in society. Martinez's (b. 1957) installation *The House that America Built* is a full-scale reconstruction of the cabin in the Montana woods used by Theodore J. Kaczynski -- a.k.a. the Unabomber --, with handsomely color-coordinated exterior colors created using Martha Stewart Signature paints. The cabin has been split in two, so that the front half tilts forward slightly, and the back half tilts rearward.

Rachel Lachowicz + John McCracken

October 17–November 4

The lure of the reductive is especially pronounced in the works of these two southern California artists from very different generations. Lachowicz (b. 1964) is a sculptor whose work is often grounded in a feminist reworking of well-known works by male artists, a process exemplified by her 1991 *Homage to Carl Andre*, in which lipstick and wax are combined to produce a work that covers six square feet of floor space. McCracken (1934-2011) was heralded during his lifetime for bringing a New Age luminosity to the forms of Minimalism, and is probably best known for his leaning 'plank' works of intense monochromatic color.

Al Ruppertsberg + Kerry Tribe

November 7–21

Ruppertsberg (b. 1944) is one of the first generation of Conceptual artists in the U.S., and his complex installation work from 1979, *Raymond Rousel Falls to the Floor (Discovering Art): A Biography (with Additional Notes)*, helps explain his considerable influence among younger artists interested in exploring linguistic meaning through art. Questions about our notions of self, time and memory, provide the content to an early video by Tribe (b. 1973), *Here and Elsewhere* [2002], where they are directed at a young child. "You can only remember what you see, feel, touch and taste," she says at one point, wise beyond her years though looking doubtful, and her uncertainty is something that all of us end up sharing with her.

John Altoon + Martin Kersels

November 28 – December 30

John Altoon (1925-1969), a near-mythic figure of the Los Angeles art scene in the 1950s and 1960s, is represented here by a cross-section of OCMA's holdings of his work, including his famed 1962 painting *Ocean Park*, in which his well-known sense of the absurd is highlighted. Kersels (b. 1960), a midcareer sculptor whose works are often grounded in action and performance, has shown often at OCMA, and the museum is proud to own a representative sampling of his works in sculpture, photography and video, beginning in the late 1990s.

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The museum's 50th Anniversary Lead Sponsor is Cartier.

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ABOUT THE ORANGE COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

The Orange County Museum of Art is the premier visual arts museum in Orange County, California. The museum's program of dynamic solo exhibitions and landmark group shows links historical and contemporary art and ideas, bridges local and global perspectives, and embraces a diverse array of cultural activities and media. The museum is dedicated to engaging diverse audiences by providing creative commentary and illuminating dialogue on issues in our society through the arts.

MUSEUM INFORMATION

Orange County Museum of Art in Newport Beach is located at 850 San Clemente Drive. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday, with extended hours Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission is \$12/adults; \$10/seniors and students; children under twelve and OCMA members are free. OCMA is open free to the public every second Sunday of the month. All facilities are handicapped accessible. For more information call (949) 759-1122 or visit www.ocma.net