

Institute of Contemporary University Art of Pennsylvania

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NEWS RELEASE

ICA Announces Three Major Exhibitions for Its 2019 Winter Season

Emerging and Established Contemporary Artists Pioneer
New Discourse Exploring Race, History, and Time in
Innovative Three-Part Exhibition *Colored People Time*

Retrospective of Tony Conrad Spanning Six Decades of
Seminal Work

First Major Solo Exhibition of Cecilia Vicuña

October 11, 2018

Philadelphia, PA

This winter, the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania will mount three exhibitions that challenge convention and offer alternative narratives for reframing and responding to social and political issues. Exhibitions include: the debut chapter of a pioneering three-part exhibition that aims to build new public discourse around the everyday experiences of black Americans; a retrospective dedicated to avant-garde artist Tony Conrad spanning six decades of his radical and experimental practice, encompassing music, film, and video art; and the first major solo exhibition of Chilean poet, activist, and artist Cecilia Vicuña, which will examine how her fluid and cross-disciplinary approach interrogates timely social topics, such as feminism, ecological destruction, and cultural homogenization.

“We are thrilled to present this incredible range of thought-provoking exhibitions and to create a space for our audiences that confronts some of the most pressing issues of our time, fostering dialogue around pre-established notions on race and culture,” said Amy Sadao, Director of ICA. “The Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania remains committed to being at the forefront of representing topical, relevant, and fearless programming that champions under-represented artists and perspectives that break boundaries. This winter, we look forward to envisioning a new future of black cultural production, experiencing new definitions of radical deconstruction and experimentation through a survey dedicated to Tony Conrad’s influential sixty year-career, and gaining deeper insight into the visionary process behind Cecilia Vicuña’s approach to creating positive social change through her practice.”



Dave McKenzie, *Futuro*, 2013. Inkjet print mounted on aluminum, 60" H x 60" W. Edition of 5, 1 AP. Courtesy of Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects. Photo: Robert Wedemeyer.



Kevin Jerome Everson, *IFO*, 2017. Film still. © Kevin Jerome Everson. Courtesy of the artist, Trilobite Arts DAC, and Picture Palace Pictures.



Martine Syms and Paul Cowan, *Most Days*, 2014. Audio recording released on 12" vinyl LP with score composed by Neil Reinolda. ©Martine Syms. Courtesy of the artist and Bridget Donahue, New York.



Tony Conrad in front of *Yellow Movie 2/2/73* (1973) and two *Yellow Movie*—35mm Format canvases (1973), in his retrospective exhibition, Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center, Buffalo, New York, December 1977. Photo: Kevin Noble. *Yellow Movie 2/2/73* courtesy The Estate of Tony Conrad and Greene Naftali, New York. Image courtesy Tony Conrad Archives. Work © The Estate of Tony Conrad.

Colored People Time: Mundane Futures, Introducing Tony Conrad: A Retrospective, and Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen will open on February 1, 2019. More information on each exhibition follows below.

Colored People Time: Mundane Futures, Quotidian Pasts, and Banal Presents

Launching February 1, 2019

Conceived by Meg Onli, assistant curator at ICA, *Colored People Time* challenges the traditional exhibitions structure and format to initiate a profound exploration into the banal and everyday ways in which the history of slavery and colonialism permeates the present and impacts the future. Broken into three separate chapters—*Mundane Futures*, *Quotidian Pasts*, and *Banal Presents*—which will open consecutively over the course of 2019, the exhibition explores how the subjugation of black people in America was not only part of our country's foundation, but exists within our present moment, and shapes our future. *Colored People Time* will feature a range of emerging and established artists including Aria Dean, Kevin Jerome Everson, Matthew Angelo Harrison, Carolyn Lazard, Dave McKenzie, Martine Syms, Sable Elyse Smith, and Cameron Rowland.

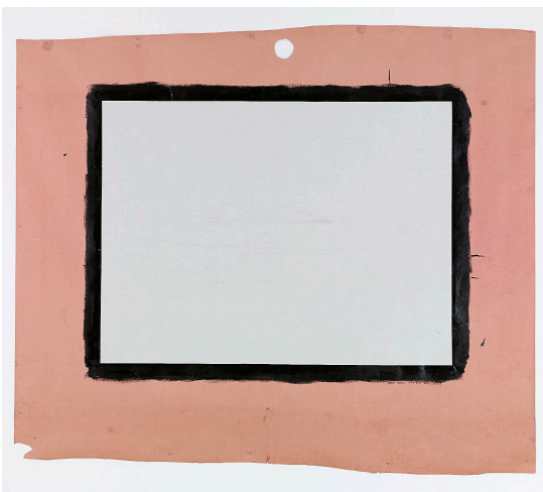
On view from February 1 – March 31, 2019, the first chapter of the exhibition, *Mundane Futures*, aims to develop a discourse around the future of black cultural production. Attempting to look beyond science fiction and fantasy, the exhibition will peer into a future focused on the ordinary through the lens of four contemporary artists: Martine Syms, Kevin Jerome Everson, Aria Dean and Dave McKenzie. Syms' film *The Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto* (2015) will create a loose framework for the exhibition that imagines a future as a continuation of the present, comprised of banal and ordinary experiences in a society that continues to struggle with white supremacy and racial injustice. The exhibition seeks to ground Sym's thinking with two historic texts: Sutton Griggs' 1899 black dystopian novel *Imperium in Imperio*, and The Ten-Point Program published in the 1972 issue of *The Black Panther*. Both literary works will contextualize the mundane future within the past, creating a tangible link that ties the concept to the history of blackness in America.

From April 26 through August 11, *Quotidian Pasts*, will examine the complexities of collecting and displaying African objects. The exhibition, co-curated with anthropologist Monique Scott and featuring new work by Matthew Angelo Harrison, is presented in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. The final exhibition chapter, *Banal Presents*, on view September 13 – December 22, will feature new and recent work by Sable Elyse Smith and Cameron Rowland and a newly commissioned work by Carolyn Lazard.

Colored People Time is organized by ICA Assistant Curator Meg Onli and will be accompanied by a catalogue published in the form of a reader.



Tony Conrad, *Untitled (Untitled (...mine if you ...yours [III])*, 2009. Acrylic paint, underwear, and bulletin board, 36 x 46 1/2 inches. Courtesy The Estate of Tony Conrad and Greene Naftali, New York. Image courtesy Greene Naftali, New York. Work © The Estate of Tony Conrad.



Tony Conrad, *Yellow Movie 2/23-24/73*, 1973. Emulsion: Sterling gray low lustre enamel (water base), thick textured; base: Dusty rose seamless paper; 92 x 107 inches. Collection Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Charles Clifton Fund, by exchange, 2012 (2012:54). Photo: Tom Loonan. Image courtesy Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo. Work © The Estate of Tony Conrad.



Cecilia Vicuña, *Precarios*, 1966-2017. Site-specific installation: 110-112 found-object sculptures: stone, shells, glass, wood, plastic, thread, debris. Presented in field of sand and along the wall on small shelves made of wood. Dimensions variable. *Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen*, 2017. Installation view, Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans. Photo: Alex Marks

Introducing Tony Conrad: A Retrospective February 1 – August 11, 2019

Introducing Tony Conrad: A Retrospective marks the first large-scale museum survey devoted entirely to pieces originally presented by the artist in museum and gallery settings. A pioneering artist who helped define American avant-garde in the 1960s and challenged barriers between different mediums through radical deconstruction and experimentation, the exhibition offers a unique opportunity to experience six decades of Conrad's work. Exhibiting a wide range of seminal pieces, the presentation will expand and deepen an understanding of his experimental and ground-breaking practice, which is primarily associated with his contributions to minimal music and structural film in the 1960s. Bringing together sculpture, painting, film, video, performance, and installation, *Introducing Tony Conrad* will create a sensory experience that invokes the participatory and performative approach of the artist. Spoken, written, and performed introductions originally created by Conrad to help frame screenings and presentations will be woven into the space, creating a level of active engagement that breaks down and invites an unprecedented reexamination of the boundaries between artistic categories.

Key pieces include *H*, 1965, *Yellow Movie (video)*, 1973, *Panopticon*, 1988 and a selection of his Invented Acoustical Tools. The exhibition will be accompanied by screenings and performances. *Introducing Tony Conrad: A Retrospective* is organized by the Albright-Knox Art Gallery with the support of the University at Buffalo Art Galleries. It's presentation in Buffalo was organized by Chief Curator Cathleen Chaffee, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, and Senior Curator Rachel Adams, University at Buffalo Art Galleries, with Assistant Curator Tina Rivers Ryan, Albright-Knox Art Gallery. Organized at ICA by Daniel and Brett Sundheim Chief Curator Anthony Elms.

Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen February 1 – March 31, 2019

Marking the first major solo exhibition of influential Chilean-born artist Cecilia Vicuña, the multidisciplinary presentation will offer unprecedented insight into the evolution of her practice through a range of landmark works, including sculpture, video, text, performance, and site-specific installations, drawn from the past four decades of her career. A poet, artist, filmmaker, and human rights activist, Vicuña operates fluidly between concept and craft, text and textile to draw attention to pressing social and political issues, transforming her pieces into topical vehicles of engagement with economic and environmental disparities and the reclamation of ancestral traditions.

The exhibition will re-frame dematerialization as more than a formal consequence of 1960s conceptualism but also as an artistic response to radical climate change. The extraordinary range of pieces featured in the exhibition will illuminate how Vicuña's approach blends overlapping discourses of conceptual art, land art, poetry, and feminist art practices. Highlights include:

- A large selection of pieces from her seminal *precario* sculpture series, which Vicuña began assembling from pieces of wood,



Cecilia Vicuña, *Semiya (Seed Song)*, 2015. 7 minutes, 45 seconds. *Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen*, 2017. Installation view, Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans. Photo: Alex Marks.



Cecilia Vicuña, *Balsa Snake Raft to Escape the Flood*, 2017. Site-specific installation: Found materials sourced from New Orleans, Chile, and New York: debris, bamboo, willows, twigs, fishing line, beads, rope, net, styrofoam, plastic, and feathers. Hangs from ceiling approximately 4-foot off the floor. Dimensions approximately 42 (l) x 6 (w) x 11 (h) feet. *Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen*, 2017. Installation view, Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans. Photo: Alex Marks.

thread, and other found objects at the beginning of her career in 1966 as a form of political resistance to the dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet;

- Quipus, an ancient method of South American record-keeping through knotted cords that Vicuña reimagines and reinvents through a mix of organic and industrial materials.

Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen is co-organized by Andrea Andersson, The Helis Foundation Chief Curator of the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans and Julia Bryan-Wilson, Associate Professor at the University of California, Berkeley. Organized at ICA by Assistant Curator Meg Onli.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

The Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania is a non-collecting institution presenting exhibitions at the forefront of contemporary practice and culture that challenge audiences to think in new ways. The ICA is free for all to engage and connect with the art of our time. Since its founding in 1963, ICA has served as a laboratory for the new, introducing and supporting the production of urgent and important contemporary art, beginning with ICA's inaugural show of paintings by Abstract Expressionist Clyfford Still, followed by the first museum show of works by Andy Warhol in 1965. Throughout its history, ICA has been instrumental in identifying and developing many promising artists before they attained prominence within the international art world, some of whom include—in addition to Warhol—Laurie Anderson, Richard Artschwager, Vija Celmins, Karen Kilimnik, Barry Le Va, Glenn Ligon, Robert Mapplethorpe, Agnes Martin, Pepón Osorio, Tavares Strachan, and Cy Twombly.

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MUSEUM HOURS

WEDNESDAY, 11AM–8PM
THURSDAY- SUNDAY, 11AM–6PM

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