



**CONTEMPORARY ARTS MUSEUM HOUSTON PRESENTS
*PERSPECTIVES 159: SUPERCONSCIOUS, AUTOMATISMS NOW***



Rachel Harrison, *Voyage of the Beagle (Set 2)*, detail, 2005.
One from a suite of 10 digital inkjet prints, 16 x 11 1/2 inches each,
edition 5 of 6. Collection of Martin and Rebecca Eisenberg.

HOUSTON, Texas (Tuesday, November 13, 2007) – From December 14, 2007 to March 9, 2008, the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston will present *Perspectives 159: Superconscious, Automatisms Now*, a group exhibition of contemporary artists whose methods include free association or “stream of consciousness.” The show will be comprised of sculpture and photography by Rachel Harrison, paintings by Sean Landers, a film by Oliver Payne and Nick Relph, and works on paper by Danica Phelps.

The phrase “stream of consciousness” was originally coined to describe the creative writing method deployed by innovative early-20th century novelists like Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. While stream of consciousness in literature strives to depict human experience through the documentation of nonlinear thought processes, this exhibition will demonstrate a method that allows for artwork to connect autobiographical and conceptual contents and yet remain open to interpretation.

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“Free-association strategies are widespread among contemporary artists, but this exhibition gives us an opportunity to consider the work of these five artists in a conducive interpretative context,” said Senior Curator Paola Morsiani. “Texas audiences will get to see the result of some of the creative strategies being used by contemporary artists at this point in Western culture.”

Perspectives 159: Superconscious, Automatisms Now will be accompanied by a *Perspectives*-format catalogue with an essay by Morsiani, reproductions of exhibited work, and documentation on the artists’ careers.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Rachel Harrison

The New York-based sculptor draws from a wide range of influences, combining art historical and pop cultural references through a diverse range of materials. This exhibition will showcase two of Harrison’s sculptures, as well as a suite of 10 digital inkjet prints.

Perspectives 159: Superconscious, Automatisms Now will mark the first Houston exhibition for Harrison, whose numerous solo shows include presentations at the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Camden Arts Centre, London; The McAllister Institute, New York; Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver; and the Milwaukee Art Museum.

Sean Landers

A post-conceptualist and a major figure in the development of an “abject, slacker aesthetic,” Landers is recognized as having had a significant influence on younger artists of the present generation due to his intelligent meditations on the condition of the artist. *Perspectives 159: Superconscious, Automatisms Now* will include two of Landers’ early monumental paintings, *Fart* and *Dumb Dumb* (both from 1993) with the artist’s stream of consciousness played out in his scrawled Twomblyesque text.

Landers has been included in exhibitions at Kunsthalle Zurich (solo); the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Visual Arts Center; the Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington; P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York; and The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Saratoga Springs, NY; as well as numerous gallery shows.

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Oliver Payne and Nick Relph

Described as “at the crossroads of social documentary, video clip, and visual diary,” Oliver Payne and Nick Relph’s videos are “the expression of an urban sensibility that combines social radicalism, the pursuit of pleasure and beauty, and a fondness for cultural paradoxes” (*Carnegie International* catalogue). Their 23-minute film *Mixtape* (2002), presented on DVD, is a fast-paced, hypnotic collage of nonlinear moments caught on film, set to Terry Riley’s influential 1968 experimental psychedelic interpretation of the soul duet “You’re No Good.”

Payne and Relph have had solo exhibitions at the Serpentine Gallery, London; Gavin Brown’s enterprise, New York; Kunsthalle, Zurich; and The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo. In addition, they were commissioned to create a new work for the 2004-5 *Carnegie International*. Payne and Relph have also been included in group exhibitions at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York; the 50th Venice Biennale; and the Tate Triennial of Contemporary British Art.

Danica Phelps

Brooklyn-based Phelps is known for her subversive methods of selling and reselling her art, as well as for her conceptual work documenting all the money she has spent since 1996. This exhibition highlights both her “chart” format and figurative works on paper—in pencil and watercolor—which record her daily activities and thought processes.

Phelps has been included in group exhibitions at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Palm Beach; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, Maine; and Arthouse, Austin; as well as gallery exhibitions New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, London, Zurich, Munich, Brussels, and Vienna.

FINAL HOUSTON EXHIBITION FOR MORSIANI

Perspectives 159: Superconscious, Automatism Now will be the final CAMH exhibition organized by Senior Curator Paola Morsiani. After more than eight years at the CAMH, Morsiani is leaving to become Curator of Contemporary Art at the Cleveland Museum of Art, an internationally renowned encyclopedic museum in the midst of a \$258 million renovation and expansion.

“We will all miss Paola’s exuberant enthusiasm and important contributions to Houston’s art community,” said Interim Director Linda Shearer. “She has had an enormous impact on the Museum’s many successes over the past nine years. Nonetheless, this is a wonderful opportunity for Paola that was too good to pass up. Professionally she’ll get to work at an art museum with one of the largest endowments in the country, and personally she’ll be that much closer to her husband in New York. We wish her nothing but the best.”

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Morsiani will lead a gallery talk prior to the preview reception for *Perspectives 159: Superconscious, Automatisms Now* on Thursday, December 13, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Morsiani has been with the CAMH since April 1999, a span that saw her curate a number of internationally acclaimed exhibitions, including *Wishing for Synchronicity: Works by Pipilotti Rist* (2006-07), *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space* (2005), and *When 1 is 2: The Art of Alighiero e Boetti* (2002). The *Houston Press* named Morsiani the city's "Best Curator" in 2006, and exhibitions organized by Morsiani were deemed "Best Art Show" the past two years (*Andrea Zittel: Critical Space* in 2006 and *Wishing for Synchronicity: Works by Pipilotti Rist* in 2007). *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space*, co-curated with Trevor Smith of the New Museum of Contemporary Art, was named "Best Architecture and Design Show of 2006" by the International Association of Art Critics.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Thursday, December 13, 6:30 p.m. Exhibiting artists **Oliver Payne** and **Danica Phelps** in dialogue with **Paola Morsiani**, curator of the exhibition and Senior Curator, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

Thursday, January 10, 6:30 p.m. **Sophie Rosenblum**, MFA candidate, Creative Writing Program, University of Houston

Thursday, February 28, 2 p.m. **Miranda Lash**, curatorial assistant, The Menil Collection

For further information on programs or to inquire about group tours, please call (713) 284-8257.

EXHIBITION FUNDING AND SUPPORT

The *Perspectives* Series is made possible by major grants from Fayez Sarofim; The Studio, the young professionals group of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; and by donors to the Museum's *Perspectives* Fund: Suzette and Darrell Betts, COADE Engineering Software, Susie and Sanford Criner, Heidi and David Gerger, Leslie and Mark Hull, Solange Knowles, Belinda Phelps and Randy Howard, and William F. Stern.

Perspectives catalogues are made possible by a grant from The Brown Foundation, Inc.

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GENERAL SUPPORT

The Museum's operations and programs are made possible through the generosity of the Museum's trustees, patrons, members, and donors. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston receives partial operating support from the Houston Endowment, Inc., the City of Houston through the Houston Museum District Association, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Continental is the official airline of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston.

The audioguide features commentary by exhibiting artists and is supported in part by Will Golden.

MISSION

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is a non-collecting institution dedicated to presenting the best and most exciting international, national, and regional art of the last 40 years, and to providing a forum for the discussion and understanding of the art of our time. Through dynamic exhibitions accompanied by scholarly publications and accessible educational programs, the Museum reaches out to local, regional, national, and international audiences of all ages.

RECENT AND UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Recent exhibitions include *Andrea Zittel: Critical Space*, the first comprehensive solo exhibition of Zittel's work in North America, named "Best Architecture or Design Show of 2006" by the International Association of Art Critics; *Black Light/White Noise: Sound and Light in Contemporary Art*, the first comprehensive review of black artists working with sound and light; and *Mary Heilmann: To Be Someone* (open through January 6, 2008), the first retrospective for the influential abstract painter, organized by the Orange County Museum of Art.

Upcoming exhibitions at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston include *Design Life Now: National Design Triennial* (January 26 to April 20, 2008), presenting the most innovative American designs in a variety of fields, organized by Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, and *The Old, Weird America* (May 3 to July 20, 2008), the first museum exhibition to explore the widespread resurgence of folk imagery and history in American contemporary art.

GENERAL INFO

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is located at 5216 Montrose Boulevard, at the corner of Montrose and Bissonnet, in the heart of Houston's Museum District. Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Thursday to 9 p.m.), and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Admission is always free. For more information visit www.camh.org or call (713) 284-8250.

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Access CAMH online at www.camh.org