



MEDIA CONTACT
Connie McAllister
Director of Community Engagement
Tel 713 284 8255
cmcAllister@camh.org

**ALWAYS FRESH
ALWAYS FREE**

**The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston's Teen Council
organizes photography show drawn from works in
The Menil Collection.**



Joshua Mann Paillet, *Untitled (Dogs, New Orleans)*, 1978. Gelatin silver print. 16 x 20 inches. The Menil Collection, Houston. Photograph by Joshua Mann Paillet/A Gallery for Fine Photography, copyright, all rights reserved.

*The Evolution of Neglect:
Scenes of Ruin and Ruins from The Menil Collection*
March 15 – April 27, 2014

OPENING RECEPTION
Thursday, March 27, 2014
5:30-7:30PM

HOUSTON, TX (March 10, 2014)—The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston's Teen Council presents *The Evolution of Neglect: Scenes of Ruin and Ruins from The Menil Collection*, featuring a selection of photographs by fifteen artists. Through varying scenes that portray



subtle signs of existence to depictions of barren landscapes, the exhibition traces the complex narrative of an evolving world through images of life and lifelessness.

Conceived out of conversations between Michelle White, Curator at The Menil Collection, and Jamal Cyrus, Education Associate and Teen Council Coordinator at CAMH, the partnership between the two organizations aims to present Teen Council with the exceptional opportunity to build a museum-quality exhibition. The Teen Council, who is employed by CAMH to help create programming for their peers, was granted rare access to the Menil's unparalleled collection of contemporary art, focusing on their photography collection, and was empowered to organize an exhibition from the ground up, a process that is loaded with discovery and educational rewards.

Starting in fall of 2013 the Teen Council made several visits to the Menil, delving deep into its photographic collection under the supervision of Curatorial Assistant Susan Sutton and Collection Registrar David Aylsworth. The group digitally reviewed almost 2500 photographs to narrow down the selection to sixty images. They then looked at actual prints, and, after much debate and discussion, the Teen Council reached the final edit of thirty-three images in early December. The Teen Council began working in small groups, each of which built a scale model of the gallery space.

Artists in the exhibition include Ansel Adams, Tom Arndt, Peter Brown, Paul Caponigro, William Christenberry, Edward Sheriff Curtis, William Eggleston, Walker Evans, John Gossage, Clarence Andre Kertesz, John Laughlin, Danny Lyon, John McIntosh, Joshua Mann Paillet, and unattributed.

The earliest image in the exhibition is by an unattributed artist and dated 1871, and the most recent photograph is one by Tom Arndt taken in 2008. Black-and-white images by influential American photographer Walker Evans are shown, including several that portray signage that could be interpreted as possible warnings: "Damaged," "Fresh Water," and "Sex Maniac." In John McIntosh's color photos "*Wonder*" *Wheat Bread* and "*Wonder*" *White Bread* (both 1985), the iconic food is placed center stage showing nature in a highly processed state. Other photographers, such as Paul Caponigro and William Christenberry, depict dusty landscapes that appear untouched while others show buildings now in ruin.

According to the Teen Council's exhibition statement, "The images frame a story familiar to all of us. They are a warning—a history, a fear that has haunted humanity since creation. Although there is an urge toward life, there is the knowledge of one's own eventual demise. Tourists visit ruins until they are in ruin."

"This process has been a long one, at least in teen time, but we are very excited about the lessons learned in exhibition planning, visual literacy, photographic history, and museum protocol. We thank the Menil for agreeing to this partnership and for working so closely with the Teen Council. The experience has been invaluable for the group," says Cyrus. The show will run in CAMH's Cullen Education Resource Room from March 15 to April 27, in conjunction with the 2014 Fotofest Biennial.

ABOUT CAMH'S TEEN COUNCIL

The CAMH Teen Council is a group of motivated young people (ages 15-19) employed by the Museum, who are committed to bringing the art of their time to their peers. They meet regularly to explore the arts and create youth-oriented programming and events for the Museum, including the yearly Teen Fashion Show and Teen Music Festival. Every other year, the Teen

Council organizes a *Perspectives* exhibition in the Zilkha Gallery featuring new work by young, Houston-area artists. The Teen Council selects the theme, title, and guest juror, and helps with the design, installation, printed exhibition catalogue, and programming.

EDUCATION SUPPORT

The Museum receives support for its education programs from: Anonymous, Dillon Kyle Architecture, Sara Paschall Dodd, Frost Bank, Louise D. Jamail, Mr. and Mrs. I.H. Kempner III, Kinder Morgan Foundation, Robert and Pearl Wallis Knox Foundation, Leticia Loya, Elisabeth McCabe, M.D. Anderson Foundation, Marian and Speros Martel Foundation Endowment, Andrew R. McFarland, Nordstrom, Inc., Ms. Louisa Stude Sarofim, Texas Commission on the Arts, Martha Claire Tompkins, and Elizabeth Satel Young.

Teen Council is supported by Ms. Louisa Stude Sarofim.

GENERAL OPERATING

Funding for the Museum's operations through the Fund for the Future is made possible by generous grants from Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen, Anonymous, Jereann Chaney, Marita and J.B. Fairbanks, Jo and Jim Furr, Barbara and Michael Gamson, Brenda and William Goldberg, Leticia Loya, Fayez Sarofim, Andrew Schirrmeister III, and David and Marion Young.

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, the City of Houston through the Houston Museum District Association, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Texas Commission on the Arts, The Wortham Foundation, Inc and artMRKT Productions. CAMH also thanks its artist benefactors for their support including Ricci Albenda, McArthur Binion, Brendan Cass, Jack Early, Robert Gober, Wayne Gonzales, Sean Landers, Zoe Leonard, Klara Lidén, Donald Moffett, Rob Pruitt, Rusty Scruby, Laurie Simmons, Josh Smith, and Marc Swanson.

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

CAMH MISSION

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is a leading destination to experience innovative art. CAMH actively encourages public engagement with its exhibitions through its educational programs, publications, and online presence.

ALWAYS FRESH, ALWAYS FREE

GENERAL INFORMATION

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, Wednesday, and Friday 10AM-7PM, Thursday 10AM-9PM, Saturday 10AM-6PM, and Sunday 12PM-6PM. Admission is always free. For more information, visit www.camh.org or call 713 284 8250.