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(see last page of release)



## **Weisman Art Museum exhibition *Hindsight is Always 20/20* tests the metaphorical eyesight of America**

Exhibition dates: August 23, 2008–January 4, 2009

In the politically-charged atmosphere of the 2008 presidential election, the Weisman Art Museum presents *Hindsight is Always 20/20*, a solo exhibition featuring prints by artist R. Luke DuBois. The exhibition runs from Saturday, August 23, 2008 to Sunday, January 4, 2009 at the Weisman Art Museum.

*Hindsight is Always 20/20* replaces *The Old, Weird America*, the exhibition originally scheduled to run during this time period at the Weisman.

DuBois's 43 prints examine the history of American political discourse through the metaphor of vision. Drawing from the annual State of the Union (SOTU) addresses given by presidents to Congress, *Hindsight* presents each President's SOTU addresses as a Snellen chart—the charts used by optometrists to test patients' vision. Instead of the typical characters present in an eye chart, *Hindsight* employs words drawn from the SOTU addresses, presented in order of most frequent (top line) to least frequent (bottom line) word. The result is a startlingly clear snapshot of the lexicon of each presidency, containing a mix of historically topical keywords and rhetoric unique to each president and the time period in which he served.

Another version of *Hindsight is Always 20/20*—where the Snellen charts are presented as light boxes instead of prints—will be exhibited at the Denver Performing Arts Complex during the Democratic National Convention in August.

"This exhibition takes a penetrating look at how our presidents have addressed us over the centuries," said Diane Mullin, associate curator at the Weisman Art Museum. "The work yields some surprising insights into the power of rhetoric in the political context. The Weisman hopes this 'eye test' will provide some insight into the current political race."

R. Luke DuBois ([www.lukedubois.com](http://www.lukedubois.com)) is a composer, performer, video artist, and programmer living in New York City. He holds a doctorate in music composition from Columbia University and teaches interactive sound and video performance at Columbia and at New York University. He has collaborated on interactive performance and installation work with many artists and organizations including Toni Dove, Matthew Ritchie, Todd Reynolds, Bang on a Can, Engine27, and LEMUR. He is a co-author of Jitter, a software suite developed by Cycling'74 for real-time manipulation of matrix data. His music (with or without his band, the Freight Elevator Quartet), is available on Caipirinha/Sire, Cycling'74, and Cantaloupe music, and his artwork is represented by bitforms gallery in New York City.

For information on additional exhibitions, see page 4 of this release.





## RELATED PROGRAMS

Programs are free unless otherwise noted.

Thursday, September 4, 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

### AMERICAN POLITICS SIDESHOW

Get into the spirit of political action and expression by participating in the American Politics Sideshow. This fun and informative day-long series of events mimics a three-ring circus, giving visitors choices of speakers, tours, films, and performers from late morning 'til nightfall. Participate in The American Soapbox, a chance to speak your mind on any topic for two minutes. Hear U of M art history faculty Jane Blocker speak about art and politics. Listen to poets read Walt Whitman. Meet film director Mark Wojahn, who will introduce a screening of his new film, *What America Needs*. Enjoy fire dancers, circus barkers, musicians, and patriotic stilt walkers. Hear performers enact speeches of American presidents in the Hindsight exhibition. Close the evening with U of M art faculty Ali Momeni and his students, demonstrating their mobile broadcast units that project student films on the exterior of the Weisman building.

The UnConvention is a non-partisan collective of Minnesota citizens who have come together to create a forum in which to promote the democratic and free exchange of ideas on important issues. This event is part of other "UnConvention" activities taking place in the Twin Cities around the time of the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul. For more info: [www.theunconvention.com](http://www.theunconvention.com).

Thursday, September 18, Noon

### NOONTIME SERIES LECTURE: UNCONVENTIONAL GATHERINGS

Marlina Gonzalez

How are artists, educators, and alternative journalists mobilizing and taking the democratic process to a creative level? Hear about the innovative ways that institutions and community members organized through The UnConvention, a series of programs exploring participatory media and democracy. Digital tagging, YouTube PSAs, melting sculptures, guerilla video journalism, and emotional maps are just some of the ways that locals are taking ownership of parks, streets, and web spaces to re-ignite the meaning and value of freedom of speech. Marlina Gonzalez is programs manager for Intermedia Arts and The UnConvention program director.

Thursday, September 25, Noon

### NOONTIME SERIES LECTURE: CITIZENS MAKING NEWS AND NEWS MAKING DEMOCRACY

Jeremy Iggers

The media landscape has changed dramatically since the 2004 U.S. Presidential election. Opportunities for citizens and alternative media to produce, aggregate, distribute, and respond to the news are increasing. Hear how these trends are playing out in the Twin Cities and talk about what this means in the context of the election season with Jeremy Iggers. Iggers is executive director of the Twin Cities Media Alliance which publishes the Twin Cities Daily Planet and coordinates education and forum events to reduce the gap between the public and the media.

Thursday, October 2, Noon

### PERFORMANCE AND DISCUSSION: ABRAHAM LINCOLN SPEAKS

Larry Elliott as Abraham Lincoln

Larry Elliott is a latter-day Abraham Lincoln, sharing the sixteenth President's height, weight, size fourteen shoes, and Hodgenville, Kentucky hometown roots. Elliott, like Lincoln, is married to a wife named Mary and has four sons. And Elliott's great, great, great, great, grandmother was the midwife who delivered baby Abe. Now a dedicated Lincoln presenter, Elliott brings to life the principles and memorable words of this passionate orator. In this program, hear selections from Lincoln's most important speeches as well as a presentation of "words he lived by." Discussion following will explore the actor's development of this historical figure, his performances for schools and events around the country, and why Lincoln still matters to American audiences.



**RELATED PROGRAMS (continued)**

Saturday October 11, 8 p.m. - Midnight

**hearSIGHTED**

Featuring music by R. Luke Dubois and DJ Etones

\$10 / \$5 WAM members, seniors, and students

Test your political vision at an evening of music, dancing, food, and drink. View R. Luke Dubois’s exhibition *Hindsight is Always 20/20* and enjoy performances by University of Minnesota electronic music students in the galleries. Catch a special performance by musician and artist R. Luke Dubois at 9:30 p.m.. Following the performance, kick up your heels to electronic grooves spun by Minneapolis-based DJ Etones.

Sunday, October 12, 2:00 p.m.

**ARTIST DIALOGUE: NET WORK: THE ART OF MINING DATA AND MEANING**

Steve Dietz and R. Luke DuBois

William G. Shepherd Room

Join Steve Dietz and R. Luke DuBois in a discussion examining DuBois’s artistic work as a composer, performer, video artist, and programmer. Hear more about DuBois’s project *Hindsight is Always 20/20*, which utilizes an algorithmic data mining process to analyze and re-present cultural content as poetry and metaphor.

Steve Dietz is a new media curator and artistic director of the 01SJ festival. He played a founding role in local programs [martists.org](http://martists.org), [ArtsConnectEd](http://ArtsConnectEd), and the Walker Art Center’s New Media Initiatives department and online gallery.

Thursday, October 16, Noon

**NOONTIME SERIES LECTURE: MEMORIES OF 1963 IN THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: BARACK OBAMA AND THE LEGACY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

Kirt Wilson

The 2008 election season has witnessed the return of the oratorical presidential candidate in the form of Barack Obama. The content, style, and impact of his speeches have inspired some to compare his rhetoric with that of Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In his presentation, Wilson examines how Obama builds upon the civil rights traditions of speech performance, how Obama’s speeches sustain a particular memory of the civil rights movement, and how his rhetoric creates political change in the present.

Kirt H. Wilson is an associate professor and former McKnight Presidential Fellow in the University of Minnesota’s Communication Studies department.

Thursday, November 6, Noon

**NOONTIME SERIES LECTURE: HOW MANY WORDS? THE HISTORY, THEORY, AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE SO-CALLED WORD/IMAGE DICHOTOMY**

Diane Mullin

There have been many more than a thousand words written on the subject of the word-image relationship. In this talk, Weisman curator Diane Mullin will examine the problem of word and image in the history of art and in the broader culture, with a particular emphasis on modern and contemporary America. Surveying both the rise of the image as main communicator in modern culture and art’s varied responses to this development, the talk will elucidate and interrogate this commonly perceived “great divide”.



## OTHER EXHIBITIONS AT WAM

### **What do YOU say, AMERICA?**

Exhibition dates: August 23, 2008—January 4, 2009

*What do YOU say, AMERICA?* showcases government-issued posters from World War I and World War II. Drawn from the Weisman collection, these posters reveal how the U.S. government informed, rallied, and persuaded Americans before and during those conflicts. Common rhetorical themes run through the exhibition: conservation of resources to support troops and war needs, the appropriateness of women working for the war effort, and the necessity of controlling information and communication. *What do YOU say, AMERICA?* is part of the Weisman's season-long examination of democracy and citizenship. As a complement to *Hindsight Is Always 20/20*, this exhibition focuses on visual communication in 20th century America. *What do YOU say, AMERICA?* invites viewers to consider how the government has communicated about war and the imperative of bringing the nation to war, both in the past and in more recent times.

### **Who is a Citizen? What is Citizenship?**

Through November 9, 2008

Artists have explored representations of citizens and citizenship since the time of the ancient Greeks. This exhibition, drawn from the Weisman's permanent collection, explores these themes in works from the early twentieth century to the present. *Who is a Citizen? What is Citizenship?* features 30 paintings, photographs, and prints ranging from Lewis Hine's photographic portraits of immigrants at Ellis Island taken in 1905 to Twin Cities photographer Joseph Allen's contemporary portraits of American Indians. Other artists included in the exhibition are Jacob Lawrence, Robert Gwathmey, Isabel Bishop, Rockwell Kent, Walker Evans, Joseph Beuys, Jerome Liebling, Thomas Arndt, Sue Coe, and Star Wallowing Bull.

### **The Exquisite Book: The International Library by Helmut Löhr, et al.**

Through November 9, 2008

The Exquisite Book features selections from Helmut Löhr's ongoing project, The International Library. For this project, Löhr created a series of altered books he called "Inside-Out." The "Inside-Out" books had scored pages on the outside and covers on the inside. Löhr sent these objects to a number of collaborators around the globe who were charged with further transforming them. *The Exquisite Book* features collaborations with such internationally renowned artists as Lawrence Weiner, Buzz Spector, and Doug Beube. Also featured are several Twin Cities-based artists, including James Conway, Harriet Bart, and Nancy Randall. *The Exquisite Book* considers these objects in the contexts of both book art and collaborative art practices. The production of handmade and altered books became an important part of an alternative art world in the 1960s. Mail art, characterized by the transferring of works by post, and collaborative art were closely related experimental practices. *The International Library* is an example of the intersection of these creative and social impulses.

### **These Artists Look Like This: Arnold Newman Portraits**

Through January 4, 2009; new works on view September 20, 2008

This exhibition, on view in the WAM corridor gallery, features portrait photographs by Arnold Newman, one of the 20th century's premier photographers. The show includes portraits of visual artists whose work is part of the Weisman collection alongside examples of their work. Artists represented in the exhibition include Georgia O'Keeffe, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, Roy Lichtenstein, and many others. The exhibition reveals the breadth of the Weisman's holdings in mid-20th century art and the strength of Newman's portraiture. Each artist's personality—and Newman's hand in teasing it out—is evident in the photographs. By placing the portraits together with the artists' works, the viewer might consider the works and the portraits in dialogue, helping to reveal and enrich the possible meanings embedded in each.



ABOUT THE WEISMAN

The Weisman Art Museum is located at 333 East River Road, Minneapolis, on the University of Minnesota campus. Admission to exhibition galleries is always free. For more information on museum hours, driving directions, and parking options, visit weisman.umn.edu

HINDSIGHT IS ALWAYS 20/20

August 23, 2008–January 4, 2009
Digital images available upon request. Email Christopher James at james052@umn.edu or call 612-625-9685.
REPRESENTATIVE IMAGES:

Table listing 11 items with titles like 'TONIGHT VIETNAM TRY' and 'ABUNDANCE BEGIN PRESIDENTS' and corresponding page numbers.

Table listing 11 items with titles like '21ST GOT LOT' and 'COVERAGE AGREE AFFORDABLE' and corresponding page numbers.

IMAGE CREDITS

top: R. Luke DuBois, detail: Lyndon Baines Johnson / 1963-1969, 24" x 32", from Hindsight is Always 20/20, 2008, editioned portfolio of 43 prints, courtesy bitforms gallery nyc.
bottom: R. Luke DuBois, detail: William Jefferson Clinton / 1993-2001, 24" x 32", from Hindsight is Always 20/20, 2008, editioned portfolio of 43 prints, courtesy bitforms gallery nyc.