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Media Contact: Erin Lauderman, 612.625.9685, elauderm@umn.edu

Weisman Art Museum creates context for an ever-shifting reality with *Reviewing the Real*

Exhibition dates: June 8 through September 8, 2013



Simon Norfolk, *Teahouse*, 2001-2001, pigmented inkjet print. The Ethelyn J. Bros Fund.

Minneapolis, MN, May 2013 – Subjects posing for a Native American portrait, dressed in “authentic” clothing. The manifestation of a museum that is portable and miniscule. An “inflatable baby” beach toy makes an iconic comment on commercialism. “Cheap tricks” fool the eye through repetition and optical illusion. Collections of fingerprints capture the essence of the human spirit and leave a literal trace on paper. These works, along with others on view, reveal a persistent artistic engagement with the idea of the real. In bringing together these exemplary works from the WAM collection, the notion of the real is seen as ever shifting and the role of

artists in defining and redefining the term is highlighted. *Reviewing the Real*,

stands as the final exhibition of WAM’s yearlong investigation of the alluring and often seemingly straightforward topic of the real. Showcasing works from the Weisman collection, the exhibition explores the many ways that artists have evoked the real over time and across media.

The exhibition is divided into six sections:

Documentary questions whether actual objectivity is possible in any medium.

Pictures of Pictures focuses on hyperrealism and the paradox of the too real.

The Thing Itself emphasizes the oftentimes thorny relationship between actual objects and their representations.

Traces explores the ways in which artists have both turned to and exploited the value we continue to place on “having been there.”

Uncut demonstrates that the strategies for conveying a sense of “the real” are limitless and often contradictory.

Utopia/Dystopia examines views of the future and what they might tell us about the real situation from which they are derived.



Chuck Close, *Robert/Square Fingerprint II*, 1978, pencil and stamp ink on paper. Promised Gift of Babe Davis.



Marcel Duchamp, *La Boîte-en-Valise* (The Box in a Valise), designed 1941, assembled 1952, paper, glass, ceramic, woven fabric tape, oilcloth, felt, metals, leather, and wood. Museum purchase.

The exhibition includes over sixty artists that span centuries in time and a variety of media. Artists include: Berenice Abbott, Vito Acconci, Marjorie Alexander, Edna Wright Andrade, Eugène Atget, Oscar Bluemner, Edward Chavez, Chuck Close, Howard Norton Cook, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Charles H. Currier, Edward S. Curtis, Allan D’Arcangelo, Julio De Diego, Le Ba Dang, Honoré Daumier, Gladys Rockmore Davis, Burhan Dogançay, Marcel Duchamp, Michael Eastman, Steve Fitch, Audrey Flack, Robbert Flick, Lucio Fontana, Alberto

Giacometti, Robert Gwathmey, Gary Hallman, Richard Hamilton, Duane Hanson, Keith Haring, Dave Heath, Barbara Hepworth, Lewis Hine, Joseph Hirsch, Martha Holt, Peter Hutchinson, Lee Krasner, Sol LeWitt, Marilyn Levine, Edmund Lewandowski, Gary Loch, Edouard Manet, Alfredo Ramos Martínez, Ed Moses, Barbara Morgan, Robert Motherwell, Simon Norfolk, José Clemente Orozco, Max Pechstein, Robert Polidori, Jacob Riis, Mac Le Sueur, Paul Shambroom, Joseph Stella, Harry Sternberg, Peter Voulkos, Andy Warhol, Mason Williams, and Jerome Witkin.

In the arts, the real typically has been understood in the narrow terms of realism, a style of representation that has been opposed to the ideal, the romantic, and the new (modern). *Reviewing the Real* showcases the various ways that the idea of the real has been invoked, utilized, and mobilized by artists. In presenting selections from the Weisman’s collection in this manner, the exhibition seeks to look at key pieces in the collection in a way that moves beyond the traditional and limiting strategy of a necessarily hierarchical opposition between the abstract (modern) and the real (tradition). Guest curator Christina Chang is the curator of engagement at the Minnesota Museum of American Art.



Steve Fitch, *Dinosaur, Highway 40, Vernal, Utah*, 1974, sepia-toned gelatin silver print. Museum purchase.

ABOUT WAM

Since its origin in 1934, the Weisman Art Museum has been a teaching museum for the University of Minnesota. Today, education remains central to the museum’s mission to create art experiences that spark discovery, critical thinking, and transformation, linking the University and the community. 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.

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