



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media contact:

Joelle Polisky, 615-516-0358

Email: jpolisky@GoShiftKey.com

Experience Artistic Brilliance - Hilliard Art Museum Unveils Upcoming Events

Lafayette, La. - Prepare to be mesmerized as the [Hilliard Art Museum](#) unveils its newest exhibitions, showcasing a diverse array of artistic talent. From the captivating works of George Rodrigue to the thought-provoking installations by Beili Liu, each exhibit promises to ignite your imagination, inspire creativity and spark dialogue.

"This season represents what the Hilliard Art Museum aspires to, says Museum Interim Director and Curator Ben Hickey. "World-class contemporary art celebrating the best artists Acadiana, the University of Louisiana Lafayette, and the United States has to offer. Be an active participant in culture at the Hilliard Art Museum."

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS:

[Sitting with George Rodrigue](#)

DATE: January 27 - July 13, 2024

George Rodrigue was a dynamic storyteller, and his portraits invite you to experience the story that each painting tells. As a descendant of Acadian exiles, Rodrigue's portraits of Cajun culture are a tribute to his heritage, showcasing cultural figures, local legends, and Acadian traditions.

Sitting With George Rodrigue brings together a selection of work ranging from the 1970s until his death in 2013. This exhibition reveals the evolution of the iconic Blue Dog paintings for which he is known worldwide. Whether portraying the Blue Dog's striking yellow eyes or the dark outline of trees against the Louisiana sky, Rodrigue's paintings have an element of mystery that is part of his enduring appeal as a storyteller. Rodrigue often had personal relationships with the people featured in his portraits. Throughout the gallery, you will find labels with more detailed information about these subjects. There are many more stories about Rodrigue that extend beyond the work on

view here. If you have a story related to his art, please visit our education space within this gallery where you can contribute to local history and scholarship of Rodrigue's work. This exhibition would not be possible without the community of friends, family, and collectors that love Rodrigue's art. Thank you to all of those who lent their work and expertise, including the George Godfrey Rodrigue Jr. Family Trust, the Life and Legacy Foundation, and the George Rodrigue Foundation of the Arts.

EVERY|WHERE: BEILI LIU

DATE: February 24 - August 17, 2024

EVERY|WHERE: BEILI LIU consists of three works of art. Each explores our relationship to water in different ways that raise fundamental questions about art and how we understand each other's lived experiences.

Water is all around us. Among many things, water sustains us, generates electricity, is used in important rites around the world, and gives the sky its blue color. Given that water is elemental and can have potent symbolic meaning, it is something each of us have a basic understanding of.

Stratus, for example, is an installation that hangs from the ceiling, hovering just 7 feet off the ground. It is a 24-foot square composed of 238 panels coated in paraffin wax, graphite, beeswax, and damar resin. Each panel has the sensibility of a black and white abstract painting, but en masse, they appear as though they were painted in a highly realistic manner meant to resemble stratus clouds. When walking through the installation, soft dappled light filters onto visitors' faces uncannily creating a sense of being outdoors. The seemingly paradoxical ways of understanding Stratus as both abstract and representative art, as well as bringing the outdoors inside occupies the middle ground in which human inquiry exists. Stratus clouds themselves are much the same. They hover low, filling the sky, but it is unclear if they will simply break up or deliver nourishing rain, perhaps even floodwaters. This is often the way in which we understand abstract ideas or the great events of the time, with shifting perspectives from one moment to the next.

Beili Liu selected the work on view in EVERY|WHERE in a purposeful fashion. Stratus, of course, represents a ubiquitous type of cloud formation most have been aware of since elementary school when we learned about the water cycle. These clouds, as indicated by the exhibition's title, are literally found everywhere. The other two works, Shore to Shore: From the Mississippi to the Arctic Ocean and Rising Water|Venice are tied to locations that are equal measures familiar and exotic, but obviously interconnected. Shore to Shore was born from Liu's residency at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans and completed later after she served as the Fulbright Arctic Chair in Norway. The coast shapes both places, feeding them, and, depending on currents, have the debris of others delivered to their shores. The proliferation of images on the wall, floating on pins in a manner similar to how they navigated the waters of the Mississippi give a sense of the scale of the world and Liu's project.

Rising Water|Venice evokes an exotic and storied locale, which, like Louisiana, relies on tourism driven by its unique culture. Both locations must also deal with the singular challenges that rising sea levels present to shrinking populations. With this in mind, Rising Water resembles a floating three-sided room constructed from silk panels exposed to blue cyanotype chemicals hanging from the ceiling. On each panel are rubbings from a 500 year old wall encircled by embroidery thread. It can be taken that

the blue denotes water and the thread care for a place at risk from water. Once lighted, the translucent shadows from the panels flood outwards into the gallery space, exponentially expanding the space the sculpture inhabits. Because visual art must be seen to truly be understood with feeling, it is more visceral. These spatial and material metaphors ground the experience in such a way that Venice and Louisiana can grow together in the minds of those who navigate EVERY|WHERE: BEILI LIU.

[Fundamento de Palo Monte: Ana Mendieta](#)

DATES: March 9 - September 14, 2024 (ART BRIDGES LOAN)

Ana Mendieta was a seminal twentieth-century Cuban-American artist known for her experimental performances. In this video from her Silueta Series (1973-1980), she uses her body to create art in conversation with different landscapes. In this five minute and fifty-five second film, the silhouette of Mendieta's body is filled with gunpowder and then set on fire. At the end, only a charred figure and the surrounding scorched earth remain as vessel for reflection on self and place.

[Bending Lines: Robert Wiggs](#)

DATES: March 16 - September 28, 2024

Robert Wiggs was an important faculty member in the history of the Department of Visual Art at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He was a sculptor and educator who shaped the aesthetic agenda of Acadiana starting in 1965 when UL was still known as the University of Southwestern Louisiana. Wiggs is known for his unique brand of abstraction based on keen observations of the natural world. He retired in 1987, the same year he discovered the ninth all-space filling polyhedron he named the "Twist Octahedron." This exhibition derives its title from a documentary by Allison Bohl and Peter DeHart which, like the film, emphasizes Wiggs' urge to have fine art and science in dialog.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS:

Creative Conversation Honoring Robert Wiggs

DATE: Wednesday, April 3, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

A Creative Conversation in support of our exhibition *Bending Lines: Robert Wiggs*. The event includes a screening of the documentary *Bending Lines: The Sculpture of Robert Wiggs* presented by the filmmakers Allison Bohl DeHart and Peter DeHart with Q & A. Dedications by the Wiggs family, as well as a Rusty Bernard performance of Kathleen Bienvenu's poem *Between the Lines #9* to follow.

Visit hilliardmuseum.org or follow us @hilliardartmuseum for more information

Filmmakers: @bendinglinesfilm

This event is free to Hilliard members, as well as UL students and faculty. Attendance is included in general admission for all others.

Ana Mendieta Creative Conversation

DATE: Thursday, April 11, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Artist Marla Kristicevich will present a guided viewing of the exhibition *Fundamento de Palo Monte: Ana Mendieta*. Kristicevich will also lead an art activity for adults and students based on Mendieta's practice. This exhibition is presented in partnership with Art Bridges!

Visit hilliardmuseum.org or follow us @hilliardartmuseum for more information

Art Bridges: @artbridgesfoundation

Marla Kristicevich: @marla_kristicevich

This event is free to Hilliard members, as well as UL students and faculty. Attendance is included in general admission for all others.

OTHER HAPPENINGS:

Yoga In the Galleries, Every Second Saturday, 11:00 am

DATES: April 13, May 11, June 8

This event is free to Hilliard members, as well as UL students and faculty. Attendance is included in general admission for all others.

Let's Make Art, Every Third Saturday, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

DATES: March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15

Through May every art activity will be inspired by art from our exhibition *Sitting with George Rodrigue*.

This event is free to Hilliard members, as well as UL students and faculty. Attendance is included in general admission for all others.

Monthly Tours Lead by Rodrigue Studios Staffers!

Join Rhonda Egan, Dickie Hebert, and Diane Keogh from Rodrigue Studios for a monthly guided tour of the exhibition *Sitting with George Rodrigue*. Tours with an asterisk are for Hilliard members only. Attendees must RSVP via Eventbrite. Attendance is limited to 40.

Friday, March 22, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm*

Wednesday, April 17, 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Wednesday, May 15, 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm*

Wednesday, June 5, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Friday, July 12, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm (7/13 last day of exhibition)

Visit hilliardmuseum.org or follow us @hilliardartmuseum for more information

George Rodrigue: @rodriguefoundation @life.and.legacy

This event is free to Hilliard members, as well as UL students and faculty. Attendance is included in general admission for all others.

Museum Hours, Admission & General Information

The Hilliard Art Museum is located at 710 E. Saint Mary Blvd. on the campus of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Museum hours are Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Sunday and Monday. For general information, please visit HilliardMuseum.org or call 337-482-2278.

About the Hilliard Art Museum

Our Museum is a bridge. Our Museum is a catalyst. Our Museum is for everyone. We connect art and education, our university and our community, generations, heritage and cultures. The Hilliard Art Museum-University of Louisiana at Lafayette is not just a place to look at art. It is a place where visitors are encouraged to truly see art. It is a place of

learning, where students sketch in the galleries and artists talk about their work. It is a destination for families, where kids express their own creativity through hands-on activities. And it is a resource for academic research and observation. Museum experiences build skills that extend into every aspect of life. Viewing art promotes dialogue and understanding between individuals, among families, and throughout our community. Art makes life richer and better for everyone.

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