

ThePowerPlant

A dynamic group of exhibitions is set to launch as part of the gallery's reopening celebration on 10 March, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto, 18 February, 2011 – In association with The Power Plant – Refresh, the gallery reopens to the public with three new exhibitions: two by internationally-acclaimed artists Thomas Hirschhorn and Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle and one group show featuring younger artists from Canada and the United States. The Power Plant is pleased to present the North American premiere of *Thomas Hirschhorn: Das Auge (The Eye)*, one of the artist's most immersive works. Also set to make its North American premiere is *Phantom Truck*, one of two works in the exhibition *Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle: Phantom Truck + Always After*. The gallery also presents *To What Earth Does This Sweet Cold Belong?*, juxtaposing the works of five artists engaged with ideas of landscape and the natural world: Andrea Carlson (Minneapolis); Annie MacDonell (Toronto); Kevin Schmidt (Vancouver); Jennifer Rose Sciarrino (Toronto); and Erin Shirreff (New York).

The shows are on view from 11 March through 29 May, 2011, and the opening party is set for **Thursday, 10 March from 6- 10 PM** as part of the **reopening celebration, free to the public**.

With this lineup of exhibitions, The Power Plant sets another benchmark. The gallery inaugurates a new lobby, website and visual identity with an outstanding exhibition program. Coined The Power Plant – Refresh, this project aims to improve access for existing and new gallery visitors, and it will also strengthen the gallery's identity as a leading contemporary art venue. Director of The Power Plant Gregory Burke has been intimately involved with all aspects of this project and has also organized the Hirschhorn and Manglano-Ovalle exhibitions. He notes: "Both exhibitions are strong sculptural statements by leading international artists that seek to give form to resistance and protest. Landscape is also a phantom reference in their installations and is explored more specifically by the artists included in the third exhibition, curated by the gallery's Assistant Curator Jon Davies. The combination of the three exhibitions makes for a powerful and thought provoking experience."

Thomas Hirschhorn is interested in the aesthetics of political protest – slogans, placards, provocative photos – and in moving people to think and act critically in the world. For much of the 2000s, Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle has been producing work exploring the "climate" of our times – both in terms of meteorology and the state of global geo-political affairs. The emerging artists in *To What Earth Does This Sweet Cold Belong?* filter their images of the earth through conceptual practices, archival research, cultural references, and technologies of simulation.

The gallery is grateful for the generosity of individual donors in the realization of our exhibition program. The Latner Family is the lead donor supporting the Hirschhorn exhibition, ensuring that the gallery could bring one of Hirschhorn's largest installations to Canada. The Institut français and Consulat Général de France à Toronto also provided major support for the exhibition. Thanks are also extended to Shanitha Kachan & Gerald Sheff, Nancy McCain & Bill Morneau and Laura Rapp & Jay Smith as supporting donors for *To What Earth Does This Sweet Cold Belong?*

Thomas Hirschhorn: *Das Auge (The Eye)*

Das Auge (The Eye) is one of Thomas Hirschhorn's largest and most visceral sculptural installations yet to be presented. Selected to represent his native Switzerland at the 2011 Venice Biennale, Hirschhorn is renowned for his sprawling, immersive artworks that use everyday materials, found images from the news and mass media, and impassioned graffiti-like texts to engage audiences in actively thinking about politics and philosophy.

Sprawling over the gallery's largest space, as well as a specially constructed mezzanine, the ambitious *Das Auge (The Eye)* was first presented at the Vienna Secession in 2008. Crafted out of paper, packing tape, colour photocopies, stuffed animals, mannequins, and other provisional materials, the exhibition is based around the image of an eye that sees only the colour red. Cobbled together from hundreds of different sculptural elements, images and texts, the entire mise-en-scène is dominated by the juxtaposition of red and white: the flags of Canada, Switzerland and other nations; the veins in an eye; blood on snow. The artist has written: "*Das Auge [The Eye]* does not see everything – but it sees everything that is red. *Das Auge* only sees the colour red. Thus it can only show red, it can only name red, and it can only 'be' red." Potent and overwhelming, *Das Auge* links perception and voyeurism with the politics of the body, all-seeing eye to all-too-fragile flesh.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication featuring an interview between Thomas Hirschhorn and Gregory Burke, a statement by the artist and full-colour images of *Das Auge (The Eye)*.

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Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle: *Phantom Truck + Always After*

Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle's sculpture and video works have explored such phenomena as war, migration, the environment, and the legacies of modernist architecture with impeccable formal elegance and metaphoric power. Originally produced as a project for documenta 12 in Kassel, Germany, Manglano-Ovalle's enigmatic sculptural installation *Phantom Truck* (2007) will be exhibited in North America for the first time. It will be presented alongside *Always After (The Glass House)*, a key 2006 video projection from his much-discussed body of work based around the buildings of Mies van der Rohe.

Phantom Truck is a full-scale reproduction of a mobile truck trailer ostensibly containing a biological weapons lab. Such a truck was described by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell when addressing the United Nations Security Council prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. After the invasion, no trailer was ever found that was capable of biological weapons production, so Manglano-Ovalle has built one: a Platonic idealization of Powell's lab. Parked in existential limbo in a darkened space, the barely perceptible yet massive truck austere reflects on its own status as a fiction while towering above those who view it.

Employing long, graceful takes, *Always After (The Glass House)* focuses on the broken glass accumulated after the windows of the Mies-designed Illinois Institute of Technology's Crown Hall were smashed as part of a ceremony in advance of the building's renovation. For Manglano-Ovalle, this dreamlike scene of destruction – where modernist progress meets crisis – is a potent metaphor for our twenty-first century way of seeing the world “as a condition of a post-event.” For Manglano-Ovalle, we are doomed to always clean up our messes – as the custodians here sweep up the shards – rather than thinking through the consequences of creating them in the first place.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication featuring an essay on Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle's recent work by Programs & Publications Coordinator Edward Kanerva and full-colour images of *Phantom Truck + Always After*.

To What Earth Does This Sweet Cold Belong?

With the gallery transformed into a darkened and grotto-like environment, *To What Earth Does This Sweet Cold Belong?* refracts the natural world through five younger artists' meditations on and mediations of the landscape. After years of critically debating the landscape genre – particularly in Canada – these artists achieve complex, fantastical visions of land, sky and sea apropos to the 21st century.

Annie MacDonell's black-and-white photographic collages draw from Roloff Beny's 1967 tome of landscape photography *To Every Thing There Is a Season*, developing the book's overtly mystical view of the Canadian landscape. Jennifer Rose Sciarrino produces delicate sculptures that simulate the natural world, evoking the uncanny with her mountains carved from paper and realistic crystals cast from resin. Erin Shirreff began making her 2009 video *Roden Crater* by printing out a photograph found online of James Turrell's unfinished work of land art. She then rephotographed the image under various kinds of lighting, artificially mimicking the changing the sky above the crater. Andrea Carlson's mixed-media drawings feature vibrant seascapes and iconic images from a variety of sources enclosed in ornate irises; these works on paper position waterways as fluid cultural conduits of trade, interaction and conflict. Finally, Kevin Schmidt's 2009 video *Disappearing Act* stages an optical illusion constructed by Schmidt painting a landscape scene onto a tree – thereby making the tree appear transparent.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication featuring an introduction by curator Jon Davies (Assistant Curator at The Power Plant), artist biographies and a checklist. In addition, Christian Bök's poem “Midwinter Glaciaria” will be available as a printed takeaway.

Support Donors

Shanitha Kachan & Gerald Sheff
Nancy McCain & Bill Morneau
Laura Rapp & Jay Smith

This exhibition is presented with the support of Bockley Gallery, Minneapolis.

Associated Events

Lecture

Thomas Hirschhorn

Thursday, 24 February, 7 PM

Studio Theatre, Harbourfront Centre

\$4 Members, \$6 Non-Members

Tickets can be purchased in advance from the Harbourfront Centre Box Office at 416.973.4000 or at the door.

Exhibition Opening Party

Thursday, 10 March, 6 – 10 PM

The Power Plant

FREE

Artists' Tour

Annie MacDonell and Jennifer Rose Sciarrino

Sunday, 13 March, 3 PM

The Power Plant

FREE Members, \$12 Non-Members

Tickets can also be purchased in advance from the Harbourfront Centre Box Office at 416.973.4000 or at the door.

A further release will be issued shortly with complete information about the diverse range of public programming scheduled for this Spring.

Thomas Hirschhorn Background

Thomas Hirschhorn (born in 1957, Bern, Switzerland) lives and works in Paris. Since the 1980s, the former graphic designer has evolved a radical sculptural installation practice. Recent solo exhibitions have taken place at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2004), Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2005), Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich (2005), Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, Spain (2006), Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (2007), and Museo Tamayo, Mexico (2008). He was included in documenta 11, Kassel (2002), 27th São Paulo Biennale (2006), and the 55th Carnegie International, Pittsburgh (2008). Hirschhorn has received the Marcel Duchamp Prize (2001) and the Joseph Beuys Prize (2004).

Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle Background

Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle (born in Madrid, 1961) has had solo exhibitions at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey and Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City (2004), the Art Institute of Chicago (2005) and the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, North Adams (2009), among many others. Group exhibitions include the Whitney Biennial, New York (2000), Liverpool Biennial (2004), documenta 12, Kassel (2007), and *Universal Code: Art and Cosmology in the Information Age* at The Power Plant (2009).

More on The Power Plant - Refresh

The Power Plant – Refresh is a project that aims to improve access for both existing and new visitors. The project will help support and grow the gallery's reputation as a leader in the presentation of contemporary art, here in Toronto and around the world. The project will ensure that the gallery is able to provide excellent visitor service, both onsite, externally and at a distance. By launching this project, the gallery aims to strengthen its identity as a leading visitor-focused contemporary art venue, significantly increase participation in programs, enhance all communications and outreach, and increase revenue generation for long-term sustainability.

Bruce Kuwabara and Taewook Eum of Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects is leading the redesign of the gallery's lobby space. KPMB is a firm that has made a major contribution to the design of other prominent museum buildings such as the Canadian Museum of Nature, Ottawa; Canada's National Ballet School, Toronto; Gardiner Museum, Toronto; and more recently, the Bell Lightbox for Toronto International Film Festival Group. This redesign of the lobby space builds on Peter Smith's original design for the renovation project by Lett/Smith Architects, when the building was first converted to an art gallery and opened to the public on 1 May, 1987. Hahn Studio and Monnet Design have teamed up to design a new visual identity for the gallery. Alison Hahn has a long history with The Power Plant and has collaborated with clients such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Stéphane Monnet and Agnes Wong of Monnet Design have been designing The Power Plant materials for two years. Their other clients include cultural organizations such as SummerWorks Theatre Festival and The Art of Time Ensemble. Hahn Studio and Monnet Design have formed a design team that is not only sensitive to the needs of a visual arts organization but familiar with The Power Plant – its past and future.

For more information on The Power Plant - Refresh, call **416-973-4927** or visit **www.thepowerplant.org**

For more information on exhibitions and all public programs, call **416-973-4949** or visit **www.thepowerplant.org**

The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery at Harbourfront Centre
231 Queens Quay West, Toronto

Admission:

FREE Members

\$6 Adults

\$3 Students / Seniors

FREE Wednesdays from 5 – 8 PM

Gallery Hours:

Tuesday to Sunday 12 – 6 PM

Wednesday 12 – 8 PM

Open holiday Mondays and Good Friday

-30-

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