PRESS RELEASE
Aliza Nisenbaum To Create Large-Scale Works During Three-Month Residency at the Minneapolis Institute of Art

Residency Will Culminate in Nisenbaum’s First Solo Museum Exhibition This Fall

Minneapolis, May 18, 2017—This summer, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) will host acclaimed New York City-based painter Aliza Nisenbaum as its artist-in-residence. Nisenbaum, whose work probes the politics of representation by bringing often-marginalized immigrant communities to the fore in life-sized portraits, will live and work in Minneapolis May 24–August 25, 2017. During her residency, she will invite members of local communities—including the city’s Phillips and Whittier neighborhoods, which have large, diverse immigrant populations—to her portrait studio adjacent to the museum. Nisenbaum will create three large-scale group portraits to be displayed in Mia’s galleries this fall; it will be the artist’s first solo museum exhibition.

Born in Mexico City, and currently an assistant professor at Columbia University School of the Arts, Aliza Nisenbaum has dedicated her practice to creating intimate, vividly colored oil-on-canvas portraits of undocumented immigrants in the New York City area. Through her artistic process, Nisenbaum seeks to transform the traditional artist-sitter relationship; her lengthy portrait sessions allow her to deeply engage with the people and communities she paints to explore the ethical experiences of exchange, engage in new means for human connection, and shed light on immigrant groups too often left in the shadows.

“Minneapolis is a city brimming with an incredible wealth of cultures and communities,” said Nisenbaum. “I’m thrilled to partner with Mia to discover this diverse place, and to get to know the individuals, families, and groups that make it so. Face-to-face interactions and relationships are at the core of my practice, and I look forward to creating work that brings different people into solidarity with each other. It’s more than the issue of immigration; it’s about healing, attention to one another, care, and giving a voice to those who need it.”

Nisenbaum’s portrait studio will be housed in a brownstone provided by Mia. The dedicated time and space will enable the artist to investigate the social and civic relationships that exist between the less visible populations around the museum and the institution itself. Mia will document Nisenbaum’s process...
through photographs and video, which will be presented alongside the finished works in the upcoming exhibition. Additional details about the exhibition will be announced in the coming months.

“At Mia, we are committed to celebrating and strengthening the many communities that make up our audiences, and continually expanding and deepening our relationships with those around us,” said Gabriel Ritter, Mia’s curator of contemporary art. “Aliza’s artistic practice aims to empower those who are underrepresented or traditionally underserved by cultural institutions such as ours through painting. Her residency and subsequent exhibition seek to build meaningful relationships between artist and sitter, as well as Mia and its neighbors, to address these gaps and work toward a more honest representation of the neighboring Phillips and Whittier communities.”

About Aliza Nisenbaum

Aliza Nisenbaum (b. Mexico City, Mexico) has presented her paintings in solo shows at Mary Mary, Glasgow; White Columns, New York; Lulu, Mexico City; Julius Caesar, Chicago; and Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago. She has had a range of two-person exhibitions, including with Kevin Kavanagh Gallery Dublin, Ireland; Susanne Hilberry Gallery, Detroit; and at Golden Gallery, N.Y. In addition to prominent private collections, her work is held by the Whitney Museum of American Art, University of Chicago Booth School of Business, The Irish Arts Council, and The Progressive Art Collection. She is represented by Mary Mary, Glasgow. She is an assistant professor of professional practice at Columbia University School of the Arts.

Nisenbaum received her BFA and MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work is currently featured in the 2017 Whitney Biennial in New York. Other national and international group exhibitions have included the Biennial of the Americas, MCA, Denver; the Rufino Tamayo Painting Biennial, Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City; Wilkinson Gallery, London; 68 Projects, Berlin; Slopes Gallery, Melbourne, Australia; Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice; Princeton University School of Architecture; The Renaissance Society, Chicago; Green Gallery, Yale School of Art; The Poor Farm, Wisconsin; The University of Wisconsin; and The University of Texas at Taylor. She has been a resident at The Sharpe-Walentas Studio Program; artist-in-residence at the University of Tennessee; SOMA Summer, Mexico City; and participated in a seminar at the Jumex Collection, Mexico City.

Fellowships and grants include the Rema Hort Mann NYC award, and the Fellowship for Immigrant Women Leaders from NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA). She has also been a participating artist at Immigrant Movement International, Corona Park, Queens. She lives in New York.

About Contemporary Art at Mia

In 2008 Mia launched an initiative to focus on the art of our times. Through its new Department of Contemporary Art, the museum brings a fresh dynamism to its galleries by collecting and exhibiting works by living artists. This initiative emphasizes the relationships among historical art, diverse cultures, and contemporary art-making.

Contemporary art of the region continues to be represented by the Minnesota Artists Exhibition Program (MAEP) as well as by selected projects with local artists, architects, designers, and other creative thinkers. In collaboration with other Mia curatorial departments, the Department of Contemporary Art also invites local and global artists as part of their artist-in-residence program to engage with both the permanent collection and neighboring communities to create public and site-specific work at Mia.
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About The Minneapolis Institute Of Art

Home to more than 89,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest wide-ranging art collections in the country—Rembrandt to van Gogh, Monet to Matisse, Asian to African—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration.

General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee.

Museum Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday 10am–5pm
Thursday, Friday 10am–9pm
Sunday 11am–5pm
Monday Closed
For more information, call + 1 612 870 3000 or visit artsmia.org