

PRESS RELEASE

Minneapolis Institute of Art to Present 'When Home Won't Let You Stay: Art and Migration'

Mia has commissioned Postcommodity to create a site-specific work exclusively for Minneapolis presentation, which responds to migration, immigration, and displacement today

Ai Weiwei's Safe Passage will be installed for the first time in North America on Mia's historic façade



Installation view of the exhibition, "Insecurities: Tracing Displacement and Shelter." October 01, 2016 - January 22, 2017. Reena Saini Kallat. Woven Chronicle. (2011-2016). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Photographer: Jonathan Muzikar. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, U.S.A. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art

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MINNEAPOLIS—January 22, 2020—The Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) will present "When Home Won't Let You Stay: Art and Migration," an exhibition exploring how contemporary artists are responding to the migration, immigration, and forced displacement of people today. The show will be on view from February 23 through May 24, following its debut at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, which organized the show.

The exhibition comprises more than 40 works by 21 artists from across the globe. Exclusive to Mia's presentation are three large-scale installations from artist and activist Ai Weiwei, the interdisciplinary arts collective Postcommodity, and CarryOn Homes, a team of five Twin Cities-based international artists dedicated to telling the stories of immigrants and refugees in the United States. Highlighting the diverse artistic responses to migration, ranging from personal accounts to poetic meditations, the exhibition includes sculpture, installation, painting, and video.

"'When Home Won't Let You Stay' and the Mia-specific installations by Postcommodity, Ai Weiwei, and CarryOn Homes exemplify how contemporary art can respond to today's most complex issues and spark vital discourse," said Gabriel Ritter, curator and head of the Department of Contemporary Art at Mia. "This exhibition is particularly meaningful in the Twin Cities, which is home to a large refugee and immigrant population who have first-hand experience of displacement and emigration. My hope is that the artistic responses to these difficult and timely issues encourage viewers to empathize with a multiplicity of positions and experiences, and recognize that native-born citizens and immigrants have much more in common than not."

Mia

Mia will be the first U.S. museum to present Ai Weiwei's (b. 1957, China) *Safe Passage* (2016), featuring thousands of refugee life jackets installed around the neoclassical columns of Mia's landmark McKim, Mead, and White building. Worn by refugees making the dangerous sea journey from Turkey to Greece, the discarded lifejackets were recovered and donated to Ai Weiwei by the mayor of Lesbos, Spyros Galinos, in 2016. The piece was previously installed on the classical columns of the Berlin Konzerthaus, Yokohama Museum of Art, and the National Archives of Chile.

In addition, Mia has commissioned Postcommodity, the interdisciplinary arts collective comprised of Cristóbal Martínez (b. 1974, USA) and Kade L. Twist (b. 1971, USA), to create a site-specific installation, titled *Let Us Pray for the Water Between Us* (2020). "We have transformed a 2200 gallon chemical storage tank, primarily used for industrial farming, into a percussive and resonant instrument," The artists said. "It was important to us that we site the work in Mia's rotunda, displacing their Greek sculpture Doryphoros. By removing the statue and additional artifacts, we're modifying a venerated place designed to secure cultural objects representing the Western, Judeo-Christian, scientific worldview. This same worldview, as administered by European and American governments, is also implicated in the displacement of Indigenous peoples, the extraction of natural resources and the pollution of tribal community lands and water. By altering the purpose of the rotunda, we have prepared a new contemporary context better suited to Postcommodity's indigenous voice. One important goal for our instrument is to acknowledge and honor, through living breathing sound, the role of indigenous tribes as important stewards of water, air and land in Minnesota and throughout the Americas. It is a prayer for greater respect, accountability and transparency among state and federal governments, and corporations to tribal governments, and communities around the appropriate management of our shared natural resources."

CarryOn Homes—the Twin Cities-based art collective that includes Zoe Cinel (b. 1992, Italian), Preston Drum (b. 1983, American), Aki Shibata (b. 1984, Japanese), Peng Wu (b. 1981, Chinese), and Shun Jie Yong (b. 1987, Malaysian Chinese)—will create a space in the final gallery of the exhibition for visitor reflection. Titled *CarryOn Homes—Living Room* (2020), the installation will feature handmade pillows made from articles of clothing linked to the artists' (and audience's) intimate and varied experiences of home. The installation is envisioned as an immersive space offering stories of home, healing, and community around the experience of local migrants and migrants living across the world. *CarryOn Homes—Living Room* will be a shared space for local immigrant and refugee communities to access resources, connect, and have restful and healing conversations.

Central to "When Home Won't Let You Stay" is the power of artistic thinking to reflect on the complexity of global migration today and to process the heated dialogues around it. The exhibition borrows its title from a poem by Warsan Shire, a Somali-British poet who gives voice to the experiences of refugees. It shares with Shire's poem, *Home*, the imperative to give a public platform to the variety of experiences around migration, ranging from its jarring realities to moments of joy and celebration.

Numerous works in the exhibition address the navigation of routes, borders, and camps. Reena Saini Kallat maps various movements of people and goods across oceans with twisted and barbed wires in the site-specific installation *Woven Chronicle* (2011–16). The U.S.-Mexico border is the focus of Guillermo Galindo and Richard Misrach's multi-year collaboration, *Border Cantos* (2004–16). They bring together images and artifacts gathered at the border, capturing its quality as an inhospitable territory and, accordingly, the distress, determination, and resourcefulness that fuel people's journeys through these borderlands.

The featured artists, some themselves immigrants, refugees, or migrants, hail from more than a dozen countries—such as Colombia, Cuba, France, India, Iraq, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States—and reveal migration as a universal force that reimagines ideas of home, place, and transit in the 21st century.

The logo for Mia, consisting of the word "Mia" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Featured “When Home Won’t Let You Stay” artists:

- Ai Weiwei (born 1957 in Beijing, China; lives and works in Berlin)
- Kader Attia (born 1970 in Dugny, France; lives and works in Berlin and Paris)
- Yto Barrada (born 1971 in Paris, France; lives and works in Tangier, Morocco, and New York)
- Tania Bruguera (born 1968 in Havana, Cuba; lives and works in Queens, N.Y.)
- CarryOn Homes, team of artists working in the Twin Cities, comprising Zoe Cinel (born 1992 in Italy), Preston Drum (born 1983 in the United States), Aki Shibata (born 1984 in Japan), Peng Wu (born 1981 in China), and Shun Jie Yong (born 1987 in Malaysia)
- Rineke Dijkstra (born 1959 in Sittard, the Netherlands; lives and works in Amsterdam)
- Guillermo Galindo (born 1960 in Mexico City, Mexico; lives and works in Oakland, Calif.)
- Mona Hatoum (born 1952 in Beirut, Lebanon; lives and works in London)
- Isaac Julien (born 1960 in London; lives and works in London)
- Hayv Kahraman (born 1981 in Baghdad, Iraq; lives and works in Los Angeles)
- Reena Saini Kallat (born 1973 in New Delhi, India; lives and works in Mumbai, India)
- Richard Misrach (born 1949 in Los Angeles; lives and works in Berkeley, Calif.)
- Richard Mosse (born 1980 in Kilkenny, Ireland; lives and works in New York)
- Carlos Motta (born 1978 in Bogotá, Colombia; lives and works in New York)
- Aliza Nisenbaum (born 1977 in Mexico City; lives and works in New York)
- Camilo Ontiveros (born 1978 in Rosario, Sinaloa, Mexico; lives and works in Los Angeles)
- Michelle Angela Ortiz (born 1978 in Philadelphia; lives and works in Philadelphia)
- Adrian Piper (born 1948 in New York; lives and works in Berlin)
- Postcommodity, artist collective comprising Cristóbal Martínez (born 1974 in Santa Fe, N.M.; lives and works in San Francisco) and Kade L. Twist (born 1971 in Bakersfield, Calif.; lives and works in Los Angeles)
- Anthony Romero (born 1983 in Austin, Texas; lives and works in Boston)
- Yinka Shonibare CBE (born 1962 in London; lives and works in London)
- Xaviera Simmons (born 1974 in New York; lives and works in New York)
- Do Ho Suh (born 1962 in Seoul, South Korea; lives and works in London; New York; and Seoul)

“When Home Won’t Let You Stay: Art and Migration” is organized by Ruth Erickson, Mannion Family Curator, and Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator, at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston.

Catalogue

A richly illustrated scholarly publication edited by Ruth Erickson and Eva Respini accompanies the exhibition, featuring an introduction by Erickson and Respini and texts by scholars and curators Aruna D’Souza, Okwui Enwezor, Thomas Keenan, Peggy Levitt, and Uday Singh Mehta, as well as conversations with artists Tania Bruguera, Guillermo Galindo, Reena Saini Kallat, Hayv Kahraman and Anthony Romero.

Related Programming

- Sunday, February 23, 1 to 4 p.m.: This opening-day program presents talks and discussions highlighting the diverse artistic responses to the subject of migration presented in the exhibition, and how they connect to our local community. Featuring artist Tania Bruguera, whose work is featured in the exhibition; Gabriel Ritter, Mia’s curator of contemporary art; and representatives from local community organizations. Tickets are \$15, \$10 for members, and free for members of the Contemporary Art Affinity group.
- Thursday, March 26, 6:30 p.m.: Jose Vargas, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, Emmy-nominated filmmaker, and a leading voice for the human rights of immigrants, will speak about his life as an undocumented immigrant, asking the audience to consider why people move and how complex the idea of “home” is for those who have. Tickets are free, but reservations are required.
- Thursday, April 16, 6 to 9 p.m.—Third Thursday: Poetry as Home, an evening celebrating poets as they examine what home means, how home is created, and why home often doesn’t let you stay. Featuring guest artists, live music, and more. Admission to Third Thursday is free. My Mia members also enjoy complimentary access to the exhibition during this event.



- Friday, May 1, 5 to 8 p.m.—Open House, a Friday-evening series featuring performances, art-making, gallery activities, and some surprises along the way, created in collaboration with local artists and community partners and designed for families, chosen family, and people of all ages. This month's theme is "Connecting Cultures." Celebrate the cultures in our community, meet your neighbors, share food, make art, and have fun. Admission is free and open to the public.
- Sunday, May 10, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.—Family Day: Making Home, a free family event that explores what a home is and how you make one. Share and hear stories of migration and home making through art and storytelling. Enjoy free admission to the special exhibition during Family Day.

In addition, Mia will host Community Circles on select Fridays, from March through May, to give visitors the opportunity to connect with local artists, educators, and community leaders for conversations, storytelling, and art making. Free and open to the public. See artsmia.org for details.

Free public tours of the exhibition will be available Tuesday through Sunday at 2 p.m., and Thursday at 7 p.m. The special exhibition admission will be charged. To arrange a private tour, call 612.870.3140 (fee charged). Adult tours begin February 29; listening devices provided.

Advisory groups

While organizing the exhibition, the ICA/Boston convened an advisory group of local scholars, activists, artists, and individuals focused on issues of migration. Over several meetings beginning in spring 2018, the curators turned to this group to help to shape the exhibition and consider its language, programming, didactics, and outreach. The committee members included: Pedro H. Alonzo, Independent Curator; Celina Barrios-Millner, Director of Equity and Inclusion, Mayor's Office for Economic Development, City of Boston; Matt Cameron, Co-director, the Golden Stairs Immigration Center, and Managing Partner, Cameron Micheroni & Silvia; Monica Garza, Charlotte Wagner Director of Education, ICA/Boston; Cheryl Hamilton, Director of Special Projects, International Institute of New England; Carol León, Outreach and Community Engagement Coordinator, Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement, City of Boston; Noora Lori, Assistant Professor of International Relations, Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University; Timothy Patrick McCarthy, Lecturer on History and Literature, Education, and Public Policy, and Core Faculty, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard University; Anthony Romero, Professor of the Practice, School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Tufts University; Adam Strom, Director, Re-imagining Migration; and Mehtap Yağcı, Executive Assistant to the Director at ICA/Boston.

In preparation for Mia's installation of "When Home Won't Let You Stay," Mia hosted listening sessions with community members and convened its own advisory committee, which included: Sarah Brenes, Director of Refugee & Immigrant Program, Advocates for Human Rights; Cawo Abdi, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Minnesota; Alfreda Daniels, Co-Founder, Black Immigrant Collective; Jack DeWaard, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Minnesota; Rodolfo Gutierrez, Executive Director, Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER); Aaron Ortiz Johnson, Latino Arts and Cultural Engagment Liaison, Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES); Erika Lee, Director of the Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota; Roxana Linares, Executive Director, Centro Tyrone Guzman; Mark Pfeifer, Director of Programs and Development, Hmong Cultural Center and Research Library; Michelle Rivero, Director of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, City of Minneapolis; Corleen Smith, Director of Immigration Services, International Institute of Minnesota.

In addition, in conjunction with the national museum-focused equity movement MASS Action (Museums as Sites for Social Action), Mia assembled a cohort of staff from across the museum to assist in the organization of this exhibition.

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About the Minneapolis Institute of Art

Home to more than 90,000 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 art collections in the country—from all corners of the globe, and from ancient to contemporary—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. For more information, call 612.870.3000 or visit artsmia.org.

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

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