



NEWS

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(More) Art of Confrontation Brings Major Works of Political Art to American University Museum at the Katzen Center

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Washington, D.C. (Sept. 8, 2008)— From Jacques Callot's "Miseries of War" etchings to a new installation by activist Yoko Ono, five new exhibitions featuring major works of political art will be on display at the [American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center](#) through Sunday, Oct. 26.

The museum's Washington location provides a unique backdrop to the work's underlying political subtext. While avoiding partisanship, the artists bring to light social, domestic, and economic issues that concern them through historical and contemporary views on society.

"It is fitting that the university whose students were recently named most politically active in the nation is bringing these works of political art to Washington for all to enjoy during this historic election season," declared Jack Rasmussen, director and curator of the American University Museum.

With election season in full swing, the following exhibitions at the American University will engage political junkies and art connoisseurs alike:

Alexandre Arrechea: *Mistrust* (Tuesday, Sept. 2–Sunday, Oct. 26)

Cuban-born artist Alexandre Arrechea was a member of the art collective Los Carpinteros for 12 years, until he left the group in July 2003 to continue his career as a solo artist. The interdisciplinary quality of Arrechea's work reveals a profound interest in the exploration of both public and domestic spaces. This quest has led him to produce such monumental projects as *Ciudad Transportable* (2000), the *Garden of Mistrust* (2003–2005), and *Perpetual Free Entrance* (2006). This exhibition will include recent sculpture, drawing, video, and interactive installation and is made possible by Alonso Art, Miami, Florida.

Sandow Birk: *The Depravities of War* (Tuesday, Sept. 2–Sunday, Oct. 26)

Jacques Callot, a seventeenth-century printmaker, created his most famous series of etchings in 1633 in response to the Thirty Years War in his native Lorraine region. These two series, aptly titled "Large Miseries of War" and "Small Miseries of War" based on the size of the prints, depict clashes between the Catholic and Calvinist forces near the Franco-German border and especially their effects on the peasant population. Contemporary artist Sandow Birk presents a reinterpretation of Callot's "Miseries of War" series in his exhibition of 15 large-scale woodblock prints "The Depravities of War." Reflecting on the current war in Iraq, Birk continues Callot's visual investigations into the inhumanity of war and the nature of warfare and violence.

Ricardo Calero. *Goya. Disparates...Continuity of an Unfinished Project*

(Tuesday, Sept. 9–Sunday, Oct. 26)

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, one of the most important and influential figures in Spanish art, created a mysterious series of 22 engravings posthumously titled "Los Disparates" that depict the most desolate characteristics of human nature. This exhibition presents these works alongside two series of works, *Disparates de Fuentdetodos* and *Grabados de Luz*, created by contemporary Spanish artist Ricardo Calero in 2005 and 2006, while in residency in Goya's home town Fuentdetodos. Calero's works, both a continuation and

reinterpretation of Goya's *Disparates*, use unconventional media of time, light, and other natural elements alongside traditional printmaking techniques. This will be the first time Calero's series and Goya's *Disparates* are presented side by side in the United States. The exhibition is presented in collaboration with the Embassy of Spain. A series of documentary films and photography from Spanish filmmakers, gallery talks, and panel discussions will be presented in conjunction with this exhibition. These events are cosponsored by AU's School of Communication and the Embassy of Spain.

Close Encounters: Facing the Future (Saturday, September 13–Sunday, October 26)

Close Encounters is a compelling dialogue on social issues disguised as a contemporary art exhibition. Featured artists include: Allora and Calzadilla, Enrique Chagoya, Mel Chin, Sam Durant, Jenny Holzer, Chris Jordan, Yoko Ono, and Taryn Simon. Close Encounters is organized by Provisions Learning Project and curated by Donald Russell and Niels Van Tomme. Close Encounters is part of BrushFire, an innovative national arts initiative focusing on social activist art in the crucial run-up to the November elections. BrushFire is sponsored by the CrossCurrents

Foundation. Additional support has been provided by the Creative Communities Fund of the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region; the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation; the Humanities Council for Washington, D.C.; the Nathan Cummings Foundation; the Tides Foundation; and individual donors.

Ledelle Moe: Disasters (Opened early summer; continues through Sunday, Oct. 26)

South African-born Ledelle Moe's outsized concrete sculptures will be displayed in the Sylvia Berlin Katzen Sculpture Garden. *Disasters* is an exploration into the fragility of power and the provisional nature of permanence through natural or manmade destruction. Employing the human and animal form, these works address notions of devastation, evoking some unnamed catastrophic rupture. These massive forms are fragments—still and quiet testimonies to a powerful event.

Through early October, a series of special events, gallery talks, film screenings, and discussions accompany each of the current exhibitions. For a complete list of events and up-to-date information go to <http://www.american.edu/katzen>.

MUSEUM INFORMATION, EXHIBITION HOURS, LOCATION:

The **American University Museum** is a three-story public museum and sculpture garden located within the university's Katzen Arts Center. The region's largest university facility for exhibiting art, the museum has a permanent collection that highlights the donors' holdings and AU's Watkins collection. Rotating exhibitions emphasize regional, national, and international contemporary art. The **Katzen Arts Center**, named for Washington-area benefactors Dr. and Mrs. Cyrus Katzen, brings all the visual and performing arts programs at AU into one space. Designed to foster interdisciplinary collaboration in the arts, the Katzen includes the museum, the Abramson Family Recital Hall, the Studio Theatre, a dance studio, an electronics studio, artists' studios, rehearsal space, and classrooms.

The museum, located at 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, DC 20016, is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday–Sunday. Museum admission is free. For more information call 202-885-ARTS (2787).

On the Web at <http://www.american.edu/museum>

Museum blog: http://art_at_thekatzen.typepad.com

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