

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

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Huma Bhabha, *Untitled*, 2008

Huma Bhabha: 2008 Emerging Artist Award Exhibition

September 14, 2008, to February 8, 2009

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum is pleased to announce the selection of Huma Bhabha as the recipient of the Museum's 2008 *Emerging Artist Award*.

Bhabha will debut an exhibition of new work at the Museum on Sunday, September 14, 2008, from 3 to 5 pm. The exhibition will run through February 8, 2009.

For this exhibition, Bhabha has created *Bumps in the Road*, a major figurative sculpture that measures 60 1/2 x 66 1/4 x 80 1/4 inches and is made of clay, wood, wire, Styrofoam, metal studs, acrylic paint, cast iron, burlap, newsprint, sand, and ash. The sculpture will be installed in the center of the gallery, offering visitors a holistic three-hundred-and-sixty-degree view of the piece. The exhibition will also include six works on paper.

Curator Merrill Falkenberg explains how Bhabha's works are distinguished by their hybridity, "Using a disparate array of materials, she creates figurative objects that simultaneously reference Egyptian, Greek, and Indian sculpture, while recalling modern and contemporary works by Giacometti, Guston, and Kiefer. Obliquely political, her works bear witness to crises in the Middle East, yet her themes are far more universal. She transcends the particulars of religion to explore the suffering inherent in the human condition and the eternal hope for regeneration."

According to Bhabha, "The recent work has begun to connect more and more with the history of sculpture, ranging from the ancient to the modern, from Eastern to Western art. The stories and themes I am interested in, such as war, colonialism, displacement and the subsequent memories of home, are eternal themes found in all cultures.... I am making work out of humble, discarded materials, to create what I call landscapes of human debris."

The Aldrich will host a reception to celebrate the exhibition on Sunday, September 14, 2008, from 3 to 5 pm. Refreshments will be served. Free round-trip transportation from New York City is available for members (non-members \$15). For reservations please call 203.438.4519.

Aldrich exhibitions are supported, in part, by the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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The Artist: Huma Bhabha, who was born in Karachi, Pakistan, earned her BFA from Rhode Island School of Design and her MFA from Columbia University. She now lives and works in Poughkeepsie, New York, and is represented by Salon 94, New York, and ATM Gallery, New York.

The Award: The *Aldrich Emerging Artist Award* is administered and the recipient selected by the curatorial staff of The Aldrich, which includes exhibitions director Richard Klein and director Harry Philbrick. Beneficiaries of the award, which has been presented by the Museum since 1997, receive a cash presentation of \$5,000 and the opportunity to exhibit at The Aldrich. Applications are not accepted for this award. Previous *Emerging Artist Award* recipients are Marti Cormand, 2007; Josh Azzarella, 2006; Todd Hebert, 2005; David Opdyke, 2004; Elizabeth Demaray, 2003; Yuken Teruya, 2002; Claire Corey, 2001; John F. Simon, Jr., 2000; Bonnie Collura, 1999; Paul Henry Ramirez, 1998; and Roxy Paine, 1997.

The Museum: The Aldrich is one of the few non-collecting contemporary art museums in the United States. Founded on Ridgefield's historic Main Street in 1964, the Museum enjoys the curatorial independence of an alternative space while maintaining the registrarial and art-handling standards of a national institution. Exhibitions feature work by emerging and mid-career artists, and education programs help adults and children to connect to today's world through contemporary art. The Museum is located at 258 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877. All exhibitions and programs are handicapped accessible. Regular Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm. For more information call 203.438.4519.

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It is the mission of The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum to be a national leader in the exhibition of significant and challenging contemporary art with an emphasis on emerging and mid-career artists, a world-class innovator of museum education programs, and a vital cultural resource for our community.