

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum

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Guido van der Werve, *Nimmer twee-Just because I'm standing here, doesn't mean I want to.* (video still), 2003

Paying a Visit to Mary 2008 Hall Curatorial Fellowship Exhibition

January 31 to June 6, 2010

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum is pleased to present *Paying a Visit to Mary*, an exhibition organized by Canadian curator Maxine Kopsa, a resident of the Netherlands, who is the second recipient of the Hall Curatorial Fellowship.

Paying a Visit to Mary refers to a line from *Tell Me*, a 1979 play about language by French artist Guy de Cointet that questions how reality is perceived and interpreted. The exhibition will open on January 31 and remain on view through June 6, 2010.

Like the play, the exhibition explores language as it relates to personal narrative and contemporary storytelling. Constructed as a “call and response” between different voices represented by a group of carefully selected contemporary artists, *Paying a Visit to Mary* tells a romantic, conceptual, and highly specific story of our time and our present human condition. The exhibition is seen as a conversation amongst both the artists and the audience with whom their work engages.

Paying a Visit to Mary is comprised of approximately twenty works by both emerging and more established artists, including **Marc Camille Chaimowicz** (France); **Guy de Cointet and Robert Wilhite** (France, United States); **Paul Elliman** (United Kingdom); **Melissa Gordon** (United States); **Gary Hill** (United States); **Experimental Jetset** (Netherlands); **Jonas Ohlsson** (Netherlands); **Willem Oorebeek** (Netherlands); **Dexter Sinister** (United Kingdom, United States); **Guido van der Werve** (Netherlands) and **Emily Wardill** (United Kingdom).

The exhibition utilizes a broad range of media—including performance, film, painting, sculpture, and installation. Curator Maxine Kopsa explains, “As a character in a Balzac short story perfectly summed up, *‘Life is simply a complication of interests and feelings’*—or, a trusting and somewhat cynical network. *Paying a Visit to Mary* is an attempt to create a seductive setting of various persuasive *‘interests,’* qualifying our present human condition.”

The Aldrich will celebrate the opening of *Paying a Visit to Mary* on **Sunday, January 31, 2010, from 3 to 5 pm.** Following the opening, patrons are invited to join the artist and curator for a live performance of the de Cointet/Wilhite play *Iglu* and a private reception from **5:30 to 8:30 pm.** Reservations are required for the performance.

FREE on-site parking is available, as is continuous round-trip transportation from the Metro North Katonah Train Station to the Museum.

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The Aldrich is supported, in part, by the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute for Museum and Library Services. *Paying a Visit to Mary: The 2008 Hall Curatorial Fellowship Exhibition* has been made possible by the generous support of the Andrew J. and Christine C. Hall Foundation and Étant donnés, The French-American Fund for Contemporary Art. The official media sponsors of exhibition openings are *Ridgefield Magazine* and *WSHU Public Radio*.

The Curator: The second Hall Curatorial Fellow, Maxine Kopsa (born Toronto, 1972) is an independent Canadian curator who has been based in Amsterdam since 1993. Kopsa is co-founding director of Kunstverein, Amsterdam, an international curatorial franchise, associate editor of the contemporary art magazine *Metropolis M*, and a tutor at the Werkplaats Typografie, Arnhem. She has contributed to publications such as *Frieze*, *Dot Dot Dot*, *Framework*, and *Art on Paper*, as well as to various catalogues. Recent exhibitions include *Word Event* at Kunsthalle Basel and *Just in Time*, at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

The Fellowship: The Hall Curatorial Fellowship, made possible by the generous support of the Andrew J. and Christine C. Hall Foundation, is a biennial program intended to bring an international perspective to The Aldrich's curatorial practice. The program continues to generate world-wide interest, gaining momentum with the success of the first exhibition, *Voice & Void*. The 2008 Hall Fellow was selected by an independent jury of distinguished art world professionals, including Carlos Basualdo, curator of contemporary art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art; Bonnie Clearwater, director and chief curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; and Sir Norman Rosenthal, former exhibitions secretary of the Royal Academy, London. The jurors selected Kopsa from a pool of applicants that included curators from Australia, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Pakistan, Norway, Romania, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

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. Free on-site parking. Regular Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 12 noon to 5 pm. For more information call 203.438.4519.