

PRESS RELEASE

RUBIN MUSEUM GALLERY TO BECOME A LAKE WITH MATTI BRAUN'S OTHERWORLDLY INSTALLATION "R.T./S.R./V.S."

Opening October 5, Braun's site-specific work allows visitors to walk across water on wood disks sourced from non-native tree species.

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Matti Braun's lake installation "R.T./S.R./V.S." opens 10/5 @RubinMuseum #ALostFuture

New York, NY (September 6, 2018) — From October 5, 2018, to February 4, 2019, visitors can traverse Matti Braun's immersive installation "R.T./S.R./V.S." by walking on slices of tree trunks peeking above the water on an in-gallery lake. The installation is the focal point of the final rotation of "A Lost Future," the three-part exhibition featuring art in an evocative range of mediums by Shezad Dawood, The Otolith Group, and Matti Braun. By challenging existing histories and considering speculative futures, the artworks and the exhibition are part of the Rubin Museum's 2018 exploration of "The Future."

Braun's art engages an expansive range of materials and mediums and frequently imagines the results of cross-cultural encounters. His practice is grounded in rigorous intellectual and skill-based research, excavating lost facts about important cultural figures and mastering and reinterpreting traditional arts techniques including batik and Chinese porcelain painting.

The site-specific installation "R.T./S.R./V.S." connects to Braun's extensive research on the Bengali filmmaker Satyajit Ray and his science fiction script *The Alien*. The first scene in Ray's unrealized film about a friendly alien from another time who lands in a small Bengali village describes a lotus pond, referenced in "R.T./S.R./V.S." Ray's script was allegedly coopted by Hollywood to become a source of inspiration for Steven Spielberg's "E.T.," though Spielberg denies this connection. This is the first time that "R.T./S.R./V.S." will be installed in the United States, speaking directly to the Indian and American cultural histories Ray's script has traversed.

The tree logs in the exhibition were sourced from local, non-native trees, hinting at the question of "alienness." Matti Braun will also present his performance lecture on Vikram Sarabhai (the "V.S." of the installation's title) at the Rubin Museum on Thursday, October 4.

"Matti Braun's poetic and profound work asks complex questions about the nature and effects of transcultural and transhistorical encounters. His proposition to invite us to an experience of becoming an alien takes on a momentous significance,

particularly in light of our current political moment,” said Beth Citron, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin Museum, and organizer of *A Lost Future*.

The artists featured in “A Lost Future” apply an investigative, rhizomatic approach to mining the past in order to broaden the possibilities of what is yet to come. Many of the artworks featured are also connected by their references to Indian figures including artist and educator K. G. Subramanyan, Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, and pioneering physicist Vikram Sarabhai. The alternative histories suggested in “A Lost Future” transcend space, time, and cultures, disrupting conventional hierarchies and a linear sense of time. Themes of virtuality, modernity, and world-making through rich storytelling are central to the exhibition.

“A Lost Future” is accompanied by a library highlighting the artists’ research-based practices, an audio guide, and a publication forthcoming in November 2018, documenting all three rotations of the exhibition. The exhibition is part of the Rubin’s yearlong exploration of “The Future,” bringing together programs, exhibitions, and experiences that invite visitors to consider a future that isn’t fixed but fluid.

“A Lost Future” is supported by Rasika and Girish Reddy, and by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Additional support has been provided by Amita and Purnendu Chatterjee, and contributors to the 2018 Exhibitions Fund. Trees donated to the installation by NYC Parks.

About Matti Braun

Matti Braun’s work investigates the unexpected, often little-known effects of cross-cultural dynamics, making visible patterns of artistic migrations and cultural misrecognitions. The artist’s exhibitions have often been organized around a specific example of such appropriation, taking, for instance, an elaborate web of interdisciplinary associations spun around the Indian physicist Vikram Sarabhai, including Mahatma Gandhi, Le Corbusier, the development of the Indian space program, the Ulm School of Design, and Lynda Benglis, as a point of departure for displays that included textile works, objects, photographs, and large-scale installations. Braun’s work is characterized by a constant negotiation between concrete references and general allusions, between poetic ephemerality and an uncanny sense of visceral immediacy.

About Beth Citron

Beth Citron is the Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art, at the Rubin Museum of Art. Her exhibitions for the Rubin Museum have included “Chitra Ganesh” (2018), “Henri Cartier-Bresson: India in Full Frame” (2017), “Genesis Breyer P-Orridge: Try to Altar Everything” (2016), “Francesco Clemente: Inspired by India” (2014), “Witness at a Crossroads: Photographer Marc Riboud in Asia” (2014), and the three-part exhibition series “Modernist Art from India” (2011–13). She completed a PhD in the History of Art at the University of Pennsylvania, and has taught in the Art History Department at New York University, from which she also earned a BA in Fine Arts.

About the Rubin Museum of Art

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The Rubin Museum of Art is an arts oasis and cultural hub in New York City's vibrant Chelsea neighborhood that inspires visitors to make powerful connections between contemporary life and the art and ideas of the Himalayas, India, and neighboring regions. With a diverse array of thought-provoking exhibitions and programs—including films, concerts, and on-stage conversations—the Rubin provides immersive experiences that encourage personal discoveries and spark new ways of seeing the world. Emphasizing cross-cultural connections, the Rubin is a space to contemplate the big questions that extend across history and span human cultures.

The Rubin Museum's preeminent collection includes over 3,200 objects spanning more than 1,500 years to the present day. Included are works of art of great quality and depth from the Tibetan plateau, with examples from surrounding regions including Nepal, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and Mongolia.

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