

## PRESS RELEASE

## WORLD PREMIERE OF NEW FILM BY THE OTOLITH GROUP IN “A LOST FUTURE” EXHIBITION AT THE RUBIN

*Opening June 1, the newly commissioned work, “O Horizon,” documents the history and speculative future of a pioneering art school in West Bengal, India*

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New film by The Otolith Group premieres 6/1 at @RubinMuseum  
#ALostFuture

**New York, NY (May 16, 2018)** — Award-winning artist collective The Otolith Group will premiere their new film “O Horizon” on June 1 at the Rubin Museum of Art. The new moving image work is the focal point of the second rotation of “A Lost Future,” a three-part exhibition featuring art from an evocative range of mediums by Shezad Dawood, Matti Braun, as well as other photographs and films by The Otolith Group. By challenging existing histories and considering speculative futures, the artworks and the exhibition are part of the Rubin Museum’s 2018 thematic exploration of “The Future.”

“O Horizon,” a newly completed film on view at the Rubin Museum from June 1–September 17, 2018, focuses on Visva Bharati, the school at Santiniketan founded in 1921 by Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, the cosmopolitan polymath who shaped Indian art, literature, music, and education. Filmed, recorded and researched over five years in West Bengal, India, “O Horizon” stages moments from Tagore’s extensive environmental pedagogy as a series of portraits, moods, studies and sketches that allude to what might be described as the outlines of a “Tagorean cosmopolitics.”



Stills from O Horizon, 2018; 4k video, color, 81 min. 10 sec.; commissioned by bauhaus imaginista and co-produced with the Rubin Museum, with kind support from Project 88

“O Horizon” draws upon the modernist theories and practices of dance and song developed by Tagore as well as the experimental theories and practices of mural, sculpture, painting and drawing developed by critical figures such as K.G. Subramanyan, Benode Behari Mukherjee, Nandalal Bose and Ramkinkar Baij,

whose work shaped the ethos of generations of Indian modernists. Set in Santiniketan, Sriniketan and surrounding areas of Birbhum, West Bengal, “O Horizon” draws together dance, song, music and recital, evoking the Tagorean imagination for the 21st century.

“Through their research-based practice centered on the moving image, The Otolith Group addresses some of the most urgent histories and social and political concerns of today,” said Beth Citron, curator. “‘O Horizon’ considers the complexity of Tagore’s pioneering vision for Santiniketan as it has evolved, looking at how the school’s experimental ethos has impacted its environment locally and beyond.”

The Rubin Museum will also feature other works and programming, including the films “Otolith I,” “Otolith II,” and “Otolith III.” “Otolith III” takes “The Alien,” an unrealized screenplay of the legendary Bengali director Satyajit Ray, as its point of departure. These films will be shown in the Rubin Museum’s theater on select dates and times. The Otolith Group will also appear on stage at the Rubin Museum on May 30 with science fiction writer Nisi Shawl to discuss the future of science fiction. They will present earlier works, “The Third Part of The Third Measure” and “Communists Like Us” at e-flux, Eyebeam, and Asia Art Archive in America in early June. Commissioned by the bauhaus imaginista, “O Horizon” will also be presented at institutions around the world later this year as part of a celebration of the Bauhaus at 100.

The Otolith Group and other artists featured in “A Lost Future” apply an investigative, rhizomatic approach to mining the past in order to broaden the possibilities for what is yet to come. 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 fall 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 invites 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. The film “O Horizon” was commissioned by bauhaus imaginista and co-produced with the Rubin Museum, with the kind support of Project 88. The exhibition is organized by Beth Citron.

### **About The Otolith Group**

The Otolith Group is an award-winning collaboration founded by the artists and theorists Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun in 2002. Their work is located in the production of moving image works, audioworks, performances and installations and is characterized by an engagement with research which began with the cultural and political legacies and potentialities of Non Aligned movements, New Media, Black

Study, Afrofuturism, Indofuturism and thinking speculatively with science fictions of the present, expanding the notion of the essay film against the traditions of documentary form. Their methodologies also formally incorporate post lens-based essayistic aesthetics that explore the temporal anomalies, anthropic inversions and synthetic alienation of the posthuman, the inhuman, the non-human and the anti human. The artistic focus on the essayistic and the decolonial has always gone together with an engagement with the history of futures and the futures of histories. Expanding on the work of The Otolith Group is the public platform The Otolith Collective. The Otolith Collective has approached curation as an artistic practice of building intergenerational and cross-cultural platforms. These platforms have critically engaged the work of Chris Marker, Harun Farocki, Anand Patwardhan, Etel Adnan, Black Audio Film Collective, Sue Clayton, Mani Kaul, Peter Watkins and Chimurenga in the United Kingdom, United States, and Europe. The practice of The Otolith Collective includes curating, programming, artists' writing, workshops, publication, and teaching, together developing close readings of image and sound in contemporary society. The Otolith Group and Collective have been presented by biennials, museums, foundations, public galleries, community spaces, art schools, universities, cinemas, and informal spaces across the world. Most recently their work has been presented at the 13th Forum Expanded, Berlinale, Berlin; Savvy Contemporary, Berlin, Khiasma, Paris; The Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven; the 13th Sharjah Biennial, Sharjah; Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; and Haus Der Kulturen de Welt, Berlin. The Otolith Group was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2010 and commissioned to create a new work for Documenta 13 in 2012.

### **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 Ph.D. 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 B.A. in Fine Arts.

### **About the Rubin Museum of Art**

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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