

FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus Biennial 2018: America's Largest Photography Biennial Met With Strong International and Local Attendance in Opening Week



Chris Engman's *Containment* (2018), a site-specific installation part of *Chris Engman: Prospect and Refuge* at Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery. Photo by Tony Walsh

(Cincinnati, OH — October 17, 2018) — **FotoFocus**, the Cincinnati-based non-profit arts organization that champions photography and lens-based art, celebrated the fourth edition of the **FotoFocus Biennial** from **October 4-7, 2018**, with **6,000** international and local visitors attending the week-long FotoFocus Biennial Program events. The month-long celebration of photography celebrates its largest year to date with programming at **more than 80** museums, galleries, and universities across **Greater Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, Dayton, and Columbus, Ohio**, and by featuring **over 450** artists, curators, and educators. Many exhibitions remain on view through early 2019.

The FotoFocus Biennial brings fresh curatorial content and programming to the region every other year. This year, and for the first time in its history, FotoFocus employed its own curatorial team as well as internationally and locally renowned guest curators to bring differing perspectives to each project. As another first, FotoFocus exhibitions take over every floor of the Contemporary Arts Center. This year's programming revolves around the *Open Archive* theme, which examines our need to preserve photographs and to tell stories through their collection, organization, and interpretation, and explores the centrality of photography and lens-based art to modernism.

The Biennial Program Week consisted of panel discussions, live performances, and more, including opening celebrations for new **Mamma Andersson** and **Akram Zaatari** exhibitions at the Contemporary Arts Center, and the opening of *Paris to New York: Photographs by Eugène Atget and Berenice Abbott*, curated by FotoFocus Artistic Director Kevin Moore, at the Taft Museum of Art.

“We are incredibly proud that this is the FotoFocus Biennial’s strongest year yet. We had more advance Biennial Passport holders than ever, and our opening week provided a distinguished forum for audiences to engage with our curated projects and insightful programs across Cincinnati,” says **Mary Ellen Goeke**, **FotoFocus Executive Director**. “It demonstrates our commitment to growing our audience—locally and internationally—and refining our central mission of presenting exhibitions and programs that are engaging, enriching, and accessible.”

“We really felt the good effects of all the guest curators: they brought in diverse crowds from other geographies and spheres of interest. The Biennial feels significantly enlarged and more international as a result,” says **Kevin Moore**, **FotoFocus Artistic Director**.

Several of the FotoFocus-curated exhibitions are accompanied by new scholarly publications, adding important contributions to their respective fields.



FotoFocus Artistic Director Kevin Moore speaking at the keynote lecture at the Taft Museum of Art | Visitors viewing Thomas Ruff works in *No Two Alike: Karl Blossfeldt, Francis Bruguière, Thomas Ruff* at the Contemporary Arts Center

BIENNIAL PROGRAM WEEK HIGHLIGHTS

The **Mayor of Cincinnati**, John Cranley, proclaimed October the Month of Photography on October 3 at the FotoFocus ArtHub in Washington Park.

Clément Chéroux, SFMOMA’s Senior Curator of Photography, opened the week with a keynote lecture at the Taft Museum of Art.

Filmmaker, artist, and writer **Miranda July** filled the seats of The Woodward Theater for her talk about her 1995 chainletter video project, *Joanie 4 Jackie*.

Akram Zaatari, Co-Founder of the Arab Image Foundation in Lebanon, discussed the concept behind his new Contemporary Arts Center exhibition, *The Fold – Space, time and the image*.

Swedish painter **Mamma Andersson** talked through her practice and new exhibition, *Memory Banks*, with FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator Kevin Moore, as part of the day-long FotoFocus Biennial Symposium.

Writer and photography critic **Teju Cole** and composer **Vijay Iyer** performed *Blind Spot*—a visual, spoken word, and improvisational music performance—in front of a packed auditorium in Memorial Hall, curated by Drew Klein, FotoFocus Guest Curator, and Performing Arts Director, Contemporary Arts Center.

Group panel discussion about photography that goes beyond its two-dimensional limits with *Wide Angle* artists **Sheida Soleimani**, **Jimmy Baker**, **Mike Jacobs** (all from Cincinnati), and **Sigrid Viir** (from Estonia), moderated by FotoFocus Deputy Director, Carissa Barnard.

Full Program Week details can be found [here](#) on the website.



Filmmaker, artist, and writer Miranda July discusses *Joanie 4 Jackie* with Kelly Gallagher, Assistant Professor of Film at Syracuse University, at The Woodward Theater

NOTABLE ATTENDEES

Among the many visitors throughout the Biennial Program Week, notable names include artists **Mamma Andersson**; **Akram Zaatari**; **Gillian Wearing**; **Sheida Soleimani**; **Jimmy Baker**; **Rick Mallette**; **Sigrid Viir**; and **Mike Jacobs**; **Miranda July**, filmmaker, artist, and writer; **Teju Cole**, *New York Times Magazine* photography critic and Harvard University's Gore Vidal Professor of the Practice of Creative Writing; **Vijay Iyer**, composer and pianist; **Clément Chéroux**, SFMOMA's Senior Curator of Photography; **Eva Respini**, ICA Boston's Barbara Lee Chief Curator; **Kelly Gallagher**, Filmmaker, Curator, and Assistant Professor of Film at Syracuse University, New Jersey; **Ulrike Meyer Stump**, Zurich University of the Arts Lecturer; **Julia Van Haften**, Founding Curator of the New York Public Library Photo Collection; **Anne McCauley**, Princeton University's David Hunter McAlpin Professor of History of Photography and Modern Art; **Peter Barberie**, Philadelphia Museum of Art's Brodsky Curator of Photographs at the Alfred Stieglitz Center; **Paul Roth**, Director of Ryerson Image Centre at Ryerson University; **Ed Juler**, Newcastle University Lecturer in Art History, England; **Nion McEvoy**, Collector, Chairman and CEO of Chronicle Books, San Francisco; **Dan Solomon**, Collector, Los Angeles; **Makeda Best**, Harvard Art Museum's Richard L. Menschel Curator of Photography.



Installation view of *Akram Zaatari: The Fold – Space, time and the image*. Courtesy CAC | Installation view of Sheida Soleimani in *Wide Angle: Photography Out of Bounds* at Alice F. and Harris K. Weston Art Gallery. Photos by Tony Walsh

FOTOFOCUS-CURATED EXHIBITIONS

CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

Mamma Andersson: *Memory Banks*

October 5, 2018 - February 10, 2019

A solo exhibition by Swedish painter **Mamma Andersson** highlighting her photographic archive, featuring six new paintings. Curated by **Kevin Moore**, FotoFocus Artistic Director. The exhibition is accompanied by a new Damiani publication, *Mamma Andersson: Memory Banks*.

Akram Zaatari: *The Fold – Space, time and the image*

October 5, 2018 - February 10, 2019

Acclaimed Lebanese artist **Akram Zaatari** combines the roles of image-maker, archivist, curator, filmmaker, and critical theorist to explore the performative role photography plays in fashioning identity. Curated by **Steven Matijcio**, FotoFocus Guest Curator and Curator, Contemporary Arts Center.

No Two Alike: *Karl Blossfeldt, Francis Bruquière, Thomas Ruff*

September 21, 2018 - January 13, 2019

This exhibition restages the 1929 exhibition of plant photographs by the German sculptor **Karl Blossfeldt** (1865—1932) and photographs of cut-paper abstractions and multiple exposures by the American photographer **Francis Bruquière** (1879—1945). The works are in dialogue with **Thomas Ruff's** contemporary photographic abstractions. Curated by **Ulrike Meyer Stump**, FotoFocus Guest Curator and Photography Historian and Lecturer at the Zurich University of the Arts. The exhibition is accompanied by a new Verlag für moderne Kunst publication, *No Two Alike: Karl Blossfeldt, Francis Bruquière, Thomas Ruff*.

TAFT MUSEUM OF ART

Paris to New York: *Photographs by Eugène Atget and Berenice Abbott*

October 4, 2018 - January 20, 2019

A historical exhibition based on the encounter during the 1920s of young American photographer **Berenice Abbott** and the elderly French photographer **Eugène Atget**, two pioneering street photographers. Curated by **Kevin Moore**, FotoFocus Artistic Director. The exhibition is accompanied by a new Yale University Press publication, *Old Paris and Changing New York: Photographs by Eugène Atget and Berenice Abbott*.

WESTON ART GALLERY

Chris Engman: Prospect and Refuge

August 31 - November 18, 2018

L.A.-based artist **Chris Engman** creates a new site-specific installation, *Containment*, for the Biennial, which is accompanied by a selection of his mind-bending photographic constructions of landscapes. Curated by **Carissa Barnard**, FotoFocus Deputy Director.

Wide Angle: Photography Out of Bounds

September 21 - November 18, 2018

A group exhibition of 20 artists manipulating the photographic medium including **Jimmy Baker, Kathe Burkhart, Harry Callahan, Tom Friedman, Robert Heinecken, John Houck, Mike Jacobs, Sol Lewitt, Goshka Macuga, Rick Mallette, Christian Marclay, Marilyn Minter, Laurel Nakadate, Seth Price, Robert Rauschenberg, Brett Schieszer, Sheida Soleimani, John Stezaker, Sigrid Viir, and John Wesley**. Curated by **Carissa Barnard**, FotoFocus Deputy Director.

THE MINI MICROCINEMA

FotoFocus at The Mini: Cinema and Archive

October 1 - October 30, 2018

A month-long film series curated **C. Jacqueline Wood**, FotoFocus Guest Curator, and Director, The Mini Microcinema. Highlighting films by **Kelly Gallagher, Stephanie Barber, Abbas Kiarostami, Guy Maddin**, and more.

FOTOFOCUS BIENNIAL PARTICIPANTS

Artists featured in this year's FotoFocus Biennial participating venues include **Derrick Adams, Diane Arbus, Liu Bolin, Chivas Clem, Nancy Ford Cones, Robert Frank, LaToya Ruby Frazier, Rebecca Hackemann, Lyle Ashton Harris, Wing Young Huie, Chris Johnson, Isaac Julien, Deana Lawson, Jason Lazarus, Irving Penn, Tyler Shields, Malick Sidibe, Xaviera Simmons, Kamal Sinclair, Bayeté Ross Smith, Question Bridge with Hank Willis Thomas, Mickalene Thomas, Gillian Wearing, Carrie Mae Weems, and Michael Wilson**.

Over 80 participating venues including **Cincinnati Art Museum, Columbus Museum of Art, Wave Pool, The Dayton Art Institute, 21c Museum Hotel, Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park and Museum**, and galleries at the **University of Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky University, Wright State University, and Xavier University**.

Full Biennial venue and artist list available at <http://www.fotofocusbiennial.org/biennial-participants/>.

ABOUT FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus is a Cincinnati-based non profit arts organization that champions photography and lens-based art through exhibitions and public programming. Since 2010, the organization has engaged art and educational institutions throughout the region to support and expand the cultural dialogue around the medium that has come to define our time.

With an emphasis on intellectually and academically rigorous programs, the organization provides uniquely enriching access to lens-based art, film, and practices inspired by photography. Signature programming includes **FotoFocus Biennial, FotoFocus Symposium, and FotoFocus Lecture and Visiting Artist Series**.

FotoFocus has collaborated with hundreds of organizations, curators, academics, and artists to present more than **600** exhibitions and programs, having contributed funding for the majority. The organization has brought hundreds of internationally-renowned photographers to the Greater Cincinnati region, including **Doug Aitken, Tina Barney, Jo Ann Callis, Gregory Crewdson, Thomas Demand, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Roe Ethridge, Larry Fink, Paul Graham, Barbara Kasten, Todd Hido, Michael Kenna, Zoe Leonard, David Benjamin Sherry, Laurie Simmons, Alex Soth, Doug + Mike Starn, Joyce Tenneson, and John Waters.**

CONNECT

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HASHTAG: #FotoFocus

PRESS CONTACTS:

Marcella Zimmermann

Vice President, Cultural Counsel

marcella@culturalcounsel.com

Jill Robinson

Account Executive, Cultural Counsel

jill@culturalcounsel.com