



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Newest Romantics

Sculptors of Botanical Photography

On view January 20 – March 25, 2017
Opening Reception: January 20, 6-8PM



Elizabeth Corkery, *Small Decors*, presented at the Telfer Gallery in Glasgow, 2014.

A Curatorial Opportunity Program Exhibition curated by Jamilee Lacy
Artists: Amy Beecher, Elizabeth Corkery, Theresa Ganz, Jessica Labatte,
Erin Leland, Heidi Norton, Frank Poor, Letha Wilson, and Clement Valla

The Newest Romantics: Sculptors of Botanical Photography, a group exhibition curated by Jamilee Lacy, features artists working with photographic imagery and objects depicting botanical still lifes, landscapes and environments. On view in New Art Center's main gallery from January 20 through March 25, the exhibition features formal variations of photography in combination with sculpture, video, architecture and site-specific installation.

"The Newest Romantics" title is Lacy's intentional casting of these contemporary artists as a new generation dealing with themes original to the Romantic era—scenic vistas, winding paths, bucolic meadows, and overgrown exotic flora that express the inherent power and beauty of nature and set scenes

of the sublime. But unlike the original Romantics, who opposed the strictly symmetrical, formal gardens and landscapes held dear by the aristocracy, The Newest Romantics embrace the tension between nature's chaos and Modernism's angular order.

While historical interpretations of nature in art underpin the exhibition's theme, the artists featured also harness the illusive qualities of photography and sleek lines of architectural sculpture in ways that showcase today's cutting-edge photographic processes. Whether constructed of orderly green-scale photographic panels or billowing and colorful cut-paper strands, the photographs of Elizabeth Corkery and Jessica Labatte present the romantic allure of secret gardens and jewel-toned florals—real or abstract.

Theresa Ganz and Letha Wilson compactly synthesize lush botanicals with harsh, almost barren landscapes, conjuring apt yet contrasting references to both the paintings of John Constable and the Hudson River School. Lenticular and architectural photographic structures by Amy Beecher and Frank Poor explore the development of new, hybrid edifices through the combination of unruly, overgrown landscapes and framed space. Other artists like Heidi Norton, Clement Valla and Erin Leland consider Romantic notions—from manicured flora to dramatic wildflower gardens—through the lens of later art historical movements and in this digital age of staged studio photography, computerized picture-making apparatuses and industrial fabrication methods. Holistically, The Newest Romantics exhibition demonstrates the lasting thematic, cultural and emotional connections artists cultivate with their environments, whether built, natural or something in between.



Theresa Ganz, *Rock Room* (in progress detail), 2016, inkjet on Tyvek, collage, vinyl tile, dimensions vary. Courtesy of the artist.



Letha Wilson, *Kauai Green Concrete Bend*, 2014, c-prints, emulsion transfer, concrete, aluminum frame, 60 1/2 x 45 1/2 x 2 inches. Courtesy the artist and Higher Pictures, New York.

About the Curator

Jamilee Lacy is Director and Curator of Providence College—Galleries in Rhode Island. Before relocating to New England, Lacy worked in Chicago as a curator of education at Northwestern University and independently as an arts writer, curator, and founding director of Twelve Galleries Project (2008 - 2013). Additionally, she has held positions as the managing editor for *Bad at Sports*, an international arts journal and podcast; inaugural curator-in-residence for Charlotte Street Foundation in Kansas City, Missouri; a curatorial writer for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, Illinois; and a curatorial associate for the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art in Prague, Czech Republic. She has published *Color: Fully Engaged*, a book of interviews and essays on contemporary art and color, and *rises Zora: An Exploration of the Urban Labyrinth*, which posits artists and cities as experimental creative partners, and is currently producing (with Meg Onli) "Remaking the Black Metropolis: Contemporary Art, Urbanity and Blackness in America," a forthcoming research survey and digital archive funded by a grant from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in Fine Art. She has also written for *Flash Art*, *Umelec Magazine*, *Art 21 Magazine* and *Art in America*. Lacy holds two undergraduate degrees in studio art and art history from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a MA in comparative literature and art from Northwestern University.

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About the Curatorial Opportunity Program (COP)

This exhibition is presented as part of the New Art Center's Curatorial Opportunity Program (COP). This open-call curatorial platform investigates contemporary culture through the visual arts. It makes possible diverse curatorial visions in a collaborative, non-profit and alternative exhibition space. Curators of selected group exhibitions receive a 1,000 USD stipend and administrative, promotional and technical support. Unique to the region, the COP is a collaborative vehicle through which curators and artists present thoughtful and innovative contemporary group exhibitions. It is the foundation of our Connections program for gallery education, and is often connected with our invitational Artist in Residence program. Learn more about the program and our upcoming curator workshops at www.newartcenter.org/cop.

Jessica Labatte, *Pond Weeds #5*, 2014, unique color photograph, 38 x 30 inches. Courtesy the artist and Western Exhibitions, Chicago.



Concurrent Artist-in-Residence: Amy Beecher

January 20 – February 18, 2017 in the Holzwasser Gallery

Open Studio Hours: Thursdays from 1-4:30PM & Saturdays from 1-6PM



This winter, Beecher will transform the New Art Center's Holzwasser Gallery into a multi-media studio, combining digital and analog modes of printmaking to create unique works of art. We invite the public to visit her studio to get to know the artist, her materials, and the way she works, and to participate in the creation of a print portfolio created by scanning, rubbing, and making marks with still life objects. In addition to hosting open gallery hours, Beecher has also planned a series of talks and workshops designed to get visitors of all ages engaged in her process.

Installation view of *Amy Beecher: tbh* at Providence College Galleries. Courtesy of the artist.

Residency Programs:

For more information or to register, please visit www.newartcenter.org or call 617-964-3424

Re-imaging Nature: Saturday, February 4, 1-2:30PM
For families with children 6+, \$15 per family
Work together to create a multi-media diorama "set" inspired by work on view in the Main Gallery.

Hybrid Species: Saturday February 11 from 1-2:30PM
For children grades 2-4, \$10 per child
Explore the gallery and choose descriptive words to guide the creation of an imagined plant.

Artist Talk: Thursday February 9, 7PM, free
Learn first-hand about the artist's practice, source materials and the inspirations including Roman murals, food advertising, and the photography of Irving Sandler.

Wild Newton: Three Thursdays (2/2, 2/9, 2/16) 4:30-6PM
For teens, grades 7-11, \$80
Reimagine a routine journey as a walk through uncharted territory to create a unique photographic zine.

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About the New Art Center

The New Art Center is a community art education space which offers everyone, at all levels of ability, exceptional opportunities to make, exhibit, view, think about and talk about art.

The New Art Center offers a supportive culture that takes art and artists seriously. We serve over 2,500 students annually in hundreds of classes and workshops. Our faculty includes some of the region's most esteemed art educators. In a setting that is welcoming and conveniently located, we offer an inclusive, multi-generational approach to art education that has served children, teens and adults at all skill levels since 1977.

We have one of the few mid-sized nonprofit exhibition spaces in New England, and attracts over 4,500 visitors annually. The New Art Center's Curatorial Opportunity Program is well respected in New England's visual arts community. This program is a unique vehicle for curators and artists to collaborate and present thoughtful, innovative concepts. It is the foundation of our Connections Program for gallery education.

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Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 1PM - 6PM, and by appointment.

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