

Images Available Upon Request

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Eco-Urgency: Artists Make the Case

June 23–August 18, 2020

Online Programs Take Place Virtually Throughout Summer, 2020

Artists presented: Rachel Frank, Susan Rowe Harrison, Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens, Courtney Mattison, Alison Moritsugu, Alexis Rockman, Francesco Simeati, Candace Thompson, Sasha Wortzel

Bronx, NY, June 16, 2020—This summer, Wave Hill, a public garden and cultural center in the Bronx, presents a *Eco-Urgency: Artists Make the Case*, a weekly series of screenings, conversations with artists, curators and scientists, nature walks, foraging tips, all focused on critical issues affecting ecosystems and biodiversity. Originally scheduled as an exhibition that would open at Wave Hill in early April, *Eco-Urgency* has been reimagined as a virtual experience. Planning for the exhibition took place as Covid-19 was first reported and then started to spread. The parallels between the ecological issues addressed with the crisis of the global pandemic, economic crisis and the ensuing recognition of systemic racism in our society, creates a moment of urgency to present this work.

Eco Urgency: Artists Make the Case features nine artists who address the need to establish a cooperative relationship with nature, one that is rooted in respecting the earth's vulnerability and acknowledges the systems that contribute to global loss of habitat and species. They adopt approaches that draw on critical analysis, observation and research that is manifested through making objects, videos and performative actions that encourage public engagement and a deepened awareness.

This online platform presents artists who act as advocates, storytellers and citizen scientists. The curators have worked with each artist to present their investigations. These programs build on virtual experiences that Wave Hill's curators initiated this past spring when the institution closed due to the spread of COVID-19. Although the gallery remains closed, the garden will open gradually, this summer. The weekly virtual programs are presented at 12 noon on Tuesdays and are accessible from our website, beginning June 23, and concluding August 18.

Works by each of the nine participating artists will be featured on Wave Hill's website at wavehill.org/discover/virtual-media/visual-arts.

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Pausing *Eco-Urgency* in April opened the door for this timely programming. The exhibition will be presented as an expanded collaboration with Lehman College Art Gallery, at galleries in both locations, planned for July - November, 2021.

Program Schedule

TUE, JUNE 23: Curatorial Introduction & Prerecorded Nature Walk with Rachel Frank

Wave Hill's curatorial team introduces the project, outlining significant themes. It will be followed by a virtual nature walk through Fort Greene Park, led by Rachel Frank. She will focus on the subtle sounds of our urban ecosystems that are easily missed during the day-to-day bustle of urban living. In response to the pandemic, and to remind us that we are all interconnected, Frank draws attention to the unheard/unseen interspecies communication that surrounds us, such as underground tree fungi in this Brooklyn park near her home.

TUE, JUNE 30: Alexis Rockman - Q & A discussion on Facebook Live and Zoom

With Wave Hill Curator of Visual Arts **Eileen Jeng Lynch**, Rockman discusses *Field Drawings*, animal and ecological portraits made using pigments from the soil, dirt and other organic material from each ecological niche. The conversation focuses on how these drawings, and the animals represented, reflect the changes in New York's landscape and ecosystems since glacial times.

TUE, JULY 7: Candace Thompson in collaboration with Solar/1 - Prerecorded Youtube video

In collaboration with **Solar/1**, New York City's only self-sustaining, solar-powered building, Thompson presents a video made for this series that focuses on urban foraging in Stuyvesant Cove Park, a public park committed to wild food education and urban permaculture initiatives. Thompson offers foraging tips and preparation techniques, and speaks to the importance and ethics of foraging in relation to our corporatized, global food system.

TUE, JULY 14: Susan Rowe Harrison - Mediated walk and Q & A on Facebook Live

Harrison guides viewers through Juhring Nature Preserve, Dobb's Ferry's largest park and pristine woodlands. Focusing on how the natural world and biodiversity inspires her practice, Harrison looks for what she calls "natural sculptures" fallen trees, exposed roots, and hanging vines that are normally hard to find in parks and gardens.

TUE, JULY 21: Richard Ibghy & Marilou Lemmens - Video screening with live discussion on Facebook Live and Zoom

Ibghy and Lemmens screen their video "Banding Young Eastern Loggerhead Shrikes in the Carden Alvar", from the series "The Violence of Care", followed by a conversation with biologist **Hazel Wheeler** and Wave Hill's Senior Curator **Jennifer McGregor** to discuss interspecies care, particularly for endangered species.

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TUE, JULY 28: Alison Moritsugu - Prerecorded video and conversation on Youtube

Moritsugu discusses two of her paintings, *We are the ash (Remnant)* and *We are the ash (Vestige)*, with **Jesse Bandler Firestone**, Wave Hill's Curatorial Assistant. Both paintings were made in response to the presence of the invasive emerald ash borer, an insect destroying North America's ash tree forests. They will also explore the linguistic and logistical parallels between the invasive ash borer and the current pandemic.

TUE, AUGUST 4: Courtney Mattison - Live discussion/presentation with Q & A on Facebook Live and Zoom

A sculptor and ocean advocate, Mattison joins Wave Hill Curatorial Assistant **Jesse Bandler Firestone** to discuss the ongoing acidification of the oceans, and explore the professional overlaps between science, advocacy, and creative practices.

TUE, AUGUST 11: Sasha Wortzel - Prerecorded video and conversation on Youtube

Sasha Wortzel and the Reverend Houston Cypress lead a nature walk, followed by a conversation during which they discuss South Florida's vulnerable aquatic ecosystems, including coastal areas and the Everglades. The artist will also talk about the history and future of these unique landscapes and ecosystems.

TUE, AUGUST 18: Francesco Simeti - Animated presentation on Youtube

Simeti's public art projects and paintings are made of botanical images from his vast archive of images, scans and prints spanning hundreds of years of botanical history. This presentation will highlight select source material he uses to foreground the precariousness of flora diversity and sustainability.

Eco-Urgency: Artists Make the Case follows the related exhibitions, including *Avifauna: Birds and Habitat*, and *Ecological Consciousness: Artist as Instigator* in 2018, and the 2017 exhibition *Jackie Brookner: Of Nature*.

Wave Hill's curatorial team includes Jennifer McGregor (Senior Curator), Jesse Bandler Firestone (Curatorial Assistant), Eileen Jeng Lynch (Curator of Visual Arts) and production by Ginger Dolden (Curator of Performing Arts).

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When Wave Hill Re-Opens

ON THE GROUNDS
JULY–NOVEMBER, 2020

Ana Flores: *Forest Dialogue*

A pair of bronze chairs by **Ana Flores** invite visitors to sit amongst the dawn redwood and bald

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cypresses in front of Glyndor Gallery. These sheltering seats remind us that we are one with the forest. The drawings that inspired the work will be on view in Wave Hill House from September through November. Flores is an award-winning sculptor, ecologist and community arts advocate based in Rhode Island. This project is funded in part by the Silver Lining Private Foundation.

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