



NEWS RELEASE

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Sotheby's INSTITUTE OF ART
 Claremont Graduate University

The Broad Stage and Sotheby's Institute Of Art, Los Angeles announce

ARTISTS, ACTIVISM, AGENCY

A conversation with

Pussy Riot Founder Nadya Tolokonnikova, Shepard Fairey, Catherine Opie and Tavares Strachan
moderated by Jonathan T. D. Neil

&

A Live Performance By Pussy Riot

Monday, February 11, 2019



Nadya Tolokonnikova



Shepard Fairey



Catherine Opie



Tavares Strachan

6:30pm Doors Open | 7:30pm On-Stage Conversation

8:30pm Reception | 9:00pm Live Performance

The Broad Stage at the Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center
1310 11th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401

Tickets on sale on **Friday, December 14** at

www.thebroadstage.org and by calling 310-434-3200

Los Angeles, CA – The Eli and Edythe Broad Stage, Santa Monica, and Sotheby's Institute of Art, Los Angeles, a partnership with Claremont Graduate University are delighted to welcome acclaimed, international artists Nadya Tolokonnikova, Founding member of Pussy Riot, Shepard Fairey, Catherine Opie and Tavares Strachan to the stage for “Artists, Activism, Agency”, the third program in the ARTISTS TALK series celebrating Los Angeles’s vibrant contemporary art scene. Moderated by Jonathan T. D. Neil, PhD, Director of Sotheby's Institute of Art – Los Angeles, the artists will speak to their ideas, actions and agency in visual and performance art on the subjects of radical protest and resistance, gender and sex, abuses of power, freedom and incarceration, truth, community, identity and pushing the limits at an unprecedented moment of political and social upheaval.

Following the talk, the double bill will feature a live performance by the activist performance art collective Pussy Riot.

About the artists

Pussy Riot

Pussy Riot is the Russian Moscow-based activist art collective known for its provocative and radiant live music performances and actions that they have continued to do since 2011 despite all the dangers coming from Putin's harsh regime.

In 2012 three members of Pussy Riot were arrested for performing a punk-prayer "Virgin Mary, please get rid of Putin" and convicted for two years in labor camps. Other known music and performance pieces by Pussy Riot include "Putin has pissed himself", "Death to prisons, freedom to protest!", "Police state", "Straight outta vagina", "Make America great again", "Refugees in" (a performance in Banksy's *Dismaland*). In 2018 four members of Pussy Riot made international headlines by running onto a football field during the World Cup final demanding to release all political prisoners.

Pussy Riot's live performance piece is led by its founding member Nadya Tolokonnikova, who served two years in jail, went through hunger strike protesting savage prison conditions and ended up being sent far away to a Siberian penal colony, where she nevertheless managed to maintain her artistic activity, and with her prison punk band, made a tour around Siberian labor camps. Nadya Tolokonnikova recently published a book "Read and Riot: A Pussy Riot Guide To Activism", well received by critics. Tolokonnikova is the recipient of the LennonOno Grant for Peace and is a co-recipient of the Hannah Arendt Prize for Political Thought. Following her release in 2013, she founded Zona Prava, a prisoner's rights nongovernmental organization. Later, she established MediaZona, an independent news service focused on the situation in Russian prisons, police departments and courts.

Pussy Riot's performance on stage is a radical audio-visual live act touching on topics such as gender identity, personal freedom, climate change, transgression and how activism can help us to shape a better world.

Shepard Fairey

Shepard Fairey was born in Charleston, South Carolina. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island. In 1989 he created the "Andre the Giant has a Posse" sticker that transformed into the OBEY GIANT art campaign, with imagery that has changed the way people see art and the urban landscape.

After 29 years, his work has evolved into an acclaimed body of art, which includes the 2008 "Hope" portrait of Barack Obama, found at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. The artist collaborated with Amplifier in 2017 to create the We The People series recognizable during the Women's Marches and other rallies around the world in defense of national and global social justice issues. Just recently Fairey teamed up with Amplifier again to launch We The Future, a campaign featuring young leaders from social change movements, working to address important issues and get art and supporting education tools into more than 20,000 classrooms. Fairey's stickers, guerilla street art presence, and almost 90 public murals are recognizable worldwide.

His works are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, the Boston Institute of Contemporary Art, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and many others. The artist's 2017 "Damaged" body of work was his largest-ever solo fine art exhibition and set record attendance figures. With the help of VRT Ventures, Fairey created the "Damaged" app showcasing the art show in a VR/AR experience for personal devices and VR headsets, available on iTunes, Google Play, Oculus, Samsung Gear, and Steam. "Force Majeure," Fairey's most recent solo museum exhibition, showcased 400 artworks from throughout the artist's career at the Moscow Museum of Modern Art in Fall 2018. Fairey is currently working on shows and murals globally and planning for the 30-year anniversary of the OBEY GIANT art campaign. For more information, visit www.OBEYGIANT.com.

Catherine Opie

Catherine Opie was born in Sandusky, Ohio and received her MFA from CalArts in 1988. Opie's work has been exhibited extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and Japan. In 2008, a mid-career survey of her work, entitled, "Catherine Opie: American Photographer," was on view at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. Her photographs include series of portraits and American urban landscapes, ranging in format from large-scale color works to smaller black and white prints. Moving from the territory of the body to the framework of the city, Opie's various photographic series are linked together by a conceptual framework of cultural portraiture.

Recent solo exhibitions have been organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, OH, the Henie Onstad Kunstenter in Oslo, Norway, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Also notable are exhibitions at the Aldrich Museum in Ridgefield, CT, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, The Saint Louis Art Museum, the Photographers' Gallery in London, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, and the Long Beach Museum of Art.

Opie was a recipient of The Smithsonian's Archives of American Art Medal in 2016, The Julius Shulman Excellence in Photography award in 2013 and a United States Artists Fellowship in 2006. She completed a permanent installation for the new Federal Courthouse in Los Angeles in 2015. She recently debuted her first film, *The Modernist*, at Regen Projects, Los Angeles, in January 2018. Opie lives and works in Los Angeles and is a Professor of Photography at UCLA.

Tavares Strachan

Tavares Strachan work has explored themes of cultural displacement, human aspiration, and mortal limitation through the lenses of science, technology, mythology and history.

One of Strachan's most iconic projects was, *The Distance Between What We Have and What We Want*, 2006, for which he embarked on a journey to the Alaskan Arctic to excavate a 4.5-ton block of ice which was then transported via FedEx to his native Bahamas and displayed in a solar-powered freezer in the courtyard of his childhood elementary school. The piece is both physically arresting and metaphorically resonant, referencing the fragility of Earth's homeostatic systems, the strange poetry of cultural and physical displacement, as well as the little-known contributions of Matthew Henson—an under-recognized American explorer and the co-discoverer of the North Pole.

In 2004, Strachan initiated an ambitious four-year multimedia body of work entitled *Orthostatic Tolerance*—the title referring to the physiological stress that cosmonauts endure while exiting and re-entering Earth from outer space. Exhibited in phases between 2008 and 2011, the *Orthostatic Tolerance* project incorporated photography, video, drawing, sculpture and installation documenting Strachan's experience in cosmonaut training at the Yuri Gagarin Training Center in Star City, Russia and in experiments in space travel conducted in Nassau under the Bahamas Air and Space Exploration Center (BASEC)—the artist's version of NASA for his native country.

In 2011, Strachan exhibited *Seen/Unseen*—a survey exhibition of past and present works—at an undisclosed location in New York City that was deliberately closed to the general public. Exploring themes of presence and absence, the exhibition focused on the artist's critical mandate of positioning works in such a way that some of their aspects are visible while others remain conceptual, asserting the exhibition itself is a work of art in its own right. Both ambitious in scope and disruptive to expectations, *Seen/Unseen* manifested a type of meditative experience, presenting over 50 works from drawings, photographs, video works, sculpture, and installations in a massive 20,000-square-foot industrial space converted specifically for the exhibition. While access to "Seen/Unseen" was restricted to the organizers, the exhibition itself was fully documented with a website and an illustrated catalogue designed by Stefan Sagmeister.

On December 3, 2018, Strachan launched his project ENOCH into space. Created in collaboration with LACMA Art + Technology Lab, ENOCH is centered around the development and launch of a 3U satellite that brings to light the forgotten story of Robert Henry Lawrence Jr., the first African American astronaut selected for any national space program. The satellite launched via Spaceflight's SSO-A: SmallSat Express mission from Vandenberg Air Force Base on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. The sculpture will continue to circle the Earth for seven years in a sun-synchronous orbit.

Strachan was born in 1979 in Nassau, Bahamas, and currently lives and works between New York City and Nassau, Bahamas. He received a BFA in Glass from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2003 and an MFA in Sculpture from Yale University in 2006. Strachan's ambitious and open-ended practice examines the intersection of art, science, and the environment, and has included collaborations with numerous organizations and institutions across the disciplines. He is currently the Allen Institute's inaugural artist-in-residence. Strachan's work has been featured in numerous solo exhibitions including *You Belong Here*, Prospect 3. Biennial, New Orleans; *The Immeasurable Daydream*, Biennale de Lyon, Lyon; *Polar Eclipse*, The Bahamas National Pavilion 55th Venice Biennale, Venice; *Seen/Unseen*, Undisclosed Exhibition, New York; *Orthostatic Tolerance: It Might Not Be Such a Bad Idea if I Never Went Home Again*, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge; *Orthostatic Tolerance: Launching into an Infinite*

Distance, Grand Arts, Kansas City; You Can Do Whatever You Like (Orthostatic Tolerance Project), Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia and Desert X, Coachella Valley, among others.

Strachan was recently appointed to the MIT List Visual Arts Center Advisory Committee as well as the RISD Board of Trustees. He has been the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the 2018 Frontier Art Prize, 2014 LACMA Art + Technology Lab Artist Grant, 2008 Tiffany Foundation Grant, 2007 Grand Arts Residency Fellowship, and 2006 Alice B. Kimball Fellowship.

Jonathan T. D. Neil

Jonathan T. D. Neil is the founding Director of Sotheby's Institute of Art – Los Angeles, a partnership with Claremont Graduate University and the Getty Leadership Institute, as well as Head of Global Business Development for Sotheby's Institute of Art. Since 2009 he has served as Associate Editor for *ArtReview* magazine. From 2011-2015 he was editor of the Held Essays on Visual Art for *The Brooklyn Rail*, and from 2008 until 2014 he was Executive Editor at The Drawing Center in New York. In 2005 he co-founded Boyd Level LLC, a private curatorial firm and consultancy that specializes in contemporary art.

Jonathan holds a PhD in Art History from Columbia University and a B.Arch from Cornell University. His critical writing has been published in *ArtReview*, *The Art Newspaper*, *Modern Painters*, *Icon*, *Hyperallergic* and in numerous catalogues for artists, galleries and museums. He has taught courses on modern and contemporary art and architectural history, the international art market, critical writing, critical theory, and the history of photography at Columbia University, Parsons The New School for Design, and Sotheby's Institute of Art – New York; currently he teaches writing and entrepreneurship for the Institute in Los Angeles.

Sotheby's Institute of Art

In 2013, Sotheby's Institute of Art established an historic partnership with Claremont Graduate University to offer a graduate Art Business program. The Institute in Los Angeles has since expanded to include an Arts Management Master's degree focusing on the institutional and community infrastructure of the visual *and* performing arts, as well as two interfield degrees that marry core curriculum from CGU's Information Systems and Technology and Fine Art programs to the core of the art business and arts management programs. Students in all programs are offered a rigorous education in the creation, management, and leadership of a wide range of arts organizations and initiatives while also enjoying unparalleled access to L.A.'s excellent cultural institutions and arts professionals. The ARTISTS TALK series is just one of a number of educational programs that The Broad Stage and Sotheby's Institute of Art – Los Angeles have presented over the past two years.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, Sotheby's Institute of Art is the leader in art-market education and object-based learning. Its faculty represents the best of the art world, helping students master the unique forces at play in the intersection of art and commerce. With programs in London, New York, and Beijing in addition to Los Angeles, Sotheby's Institute of Art offers Master's Degrees, 15-week semester intensives, study abroad, summer study, online learning and executive education.

ARTISTS TALK presented by The Broad Stage and Sotheby's Institute of Art – Los Angeles

The ARTISTS TALK series presented by The Broad Stage and Sotheby's Institute of Art – Los Angeles, began in 2017 with an inaugural conversation on stage with California art icons and Ferus Group artists Larry Bell, Billy Al Bengston, Ed Moses and Ed Ruscha, moderated by author and art critic Hunter Drohojowska-Philp. In May 2018, the second talk in the series between Njideka Akunyili Crosby and Charles Gaines was moderated by Hammer Museum Senior Curator Anne Ellegood. The Executive Producer of these ARTISTS TALK programs was William Turner.

This event is presented in conjunction with Frieze Los Angeles, the contemporary art fair debuting in Los Angeles February 15-17, 2019.

Images L to R: Shepard Fairey, courtesy Obey Giant Art; Nadya Tolokonnikova, photo by Sasha Sofeev, courtesy Pussy Riot; Catherine Opie, photo (c)Catherine Opie Studio; Tavares Strachan, courtesy the artist, photo by Brooke DiDonato.

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Nadya Tolokonnikova

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Shepard Fairey

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Catherine Opie

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Instagram: @csopie

Tavares Strachan

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Jonathan T. D. Neil (Moderator)

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FOR CALENDAR SECTION

What: "ARTISTS, ACTVISM, AGENCY"
PUSSY RIOT FOUNDER NADYA TOLOKONNIKOVA, SHEPARD FAIREY, CATHERINE OPIE AND TAVARES STRACHAN IN CONVERSATION, MODERATED BY JONATHAN T.D NEIL.
&
A LIVE PERFORMANCE BY PUSSY RIOT

Where: The Eli & Edythe Broad Stage
1310 11th St. Santa Monica CA 90401. Limited free parking is available.

When: Monday, February 11, 2019 | Doors Open 6:30pm; on-stage talk at 7:30pm; live performance 9:00pm.

Tickets

Prices: Starting at \$39 (Prices subject to change)

Online: www.thebroadstage.org

Phone: Patron Services at 310.434.3200

In Person: Box office at 1310 11th St. Santa Monica CA 90401 beginning three hours prior to performance.

Editors please note when referring to our venue, we are appropriately **The Broad Stage** (three words) and we are located in Santa Monica, California. **The Broad** (two words) refers to the contemporary art museum on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles.

The information contained herein is accurate at the time of going to press, but may be subject to change.