

## **Minneapolis Institute of Arts Explores Intersection of Fact and Fiction in “More Real? Art in the Age of Truthiness”**

*“More Real? Art in the Age of Truthiness” features work by Ai Weiwei, Vik Muniz, Thomas Demand, and others.*



Seung Woo Back, *RW01-001*, 2004, from the series *Real World I*, digital print, Courtesy of the artist and Gana Art Gallery, Seoul.

**Exhibition includes office of disappeared McCarthy-era curator fabricated by artist Mark Dion**

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Consider searing documentary photographs of a war-ravaged country, exposed as elaborately staged fakes. Or irreplaceable Neolithic urns dipped in cheerily bright, industrial paint that obscures their ancient markings. Or a coal company’s Web site promising inhalers to asthma-afflicted children, revealed as an elaborate spoof. These and other works of art that blur notions of reality and truth are the subject of a new exhibition organized by Elizabeth Armstrong, contemporary art curator at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA). “More Real? Art in the Age of Truthiness” takes satirist Stephen Colbert’s coined term, “truthiness”—fabricated truths, without regard to fact or logic—as its starting point to explore the unstable relationship between fact and fiction in the 21st century.

Opening March 3, 2013, at the MIA, the exhibition will present 60 works by more than 25 recognized and emerging international artists, including: Ai Weiwei, Seung Woo Back, Zoe Beloff, Cao Fei, Thomas Demand, Mark Dion, Leandro Erlich, Omer Fast, John Gerrard, Johan Grimonprez, Iris Haussler, Jonn Herschend, Pierre Huyghe, Bertrand Lavier, Joel Lederer, Sharon Lockhart, Inigo Manglano-Ovalle, Eva and Franco Mattes, Jonathan Monk, Vik Muniz, An My Lê, Trevor Paglen, Walid Raad, Dario Robleto, Eve Sussman, Mary Temple, and Yes Men. The exhibition is presented in collaboration with SITE Sante Fe, where it debuted in the fall, and will remain on view at the MIA through June 9, 2013.

The MIA's installation of the exhibition will include a new work by Dion that aims to invigorate museum visitors with curiosity and wonder. For "More Real?" in Minneapolis, Dion has constructed the office of a fictional MIA curator who, Dion has scripted, disappeared in the mid-1950s after being called to Washington, D.C., to testify in front of Senator Joseph McCarthy. For the exhibition, *his office*, complete with furniture, books, period art, files, papers, and other materials, will be open to visitors, mirroring the museum's popular period rooms and paying homage to the victims of McCarthyism, a very real example of "truthiness."

"Satirical newspapers are creating fake news stories in response to real events, while comedy television shows are being taken for legitimate and credible sources of the news," Armstrong said. "'More Real?' brings together the work of artists from across the globe who are responding to 'truthiness' in politics and culture, to understand better our perceptions of truth, reality, and the genuine."

Broken into three thematic sections—*Deception and Play: From Trompe l'oeil to the Authentic Fake; The Status of Fact: Unreliable Narrators, Parafiction, and Truthiness*; and *Reshaping the Real: Cinema, Memory, and the Virtual*—the exhibition presents work across a variety of traditional and experimental mediums, including painting, sculpture, photography, video, sound, and online installations. Highlights of the works on view include:

- An-My Lê's *Small Wars*, 1999–2002, battle-scene re-enactments of the Vietnam War that appear to be documentary photographs;
- Ai Weiwei's *Colored Vases*, 2006, Neolithic and Han dynasty urns, which may or may not be authentic, subjected to smashing, grinding, and dipping into vats of industrial paint to obliterate their historic and aesthetic importance;
- Joel Lederer's *The Metaverse is Beautiful*, 2008, large-scale images of utopian landscapes in the virtual world *Second Life*;
- Vik Muniz's *Verso*, 2008, a series of meticulously rendered objects that simulate the reverse sides of iconic paintings, complete with their loan stickers, gallery labels, historic inscriptions, and scratches and marks from the ravages of time;
- Eve Sussman's *89 Seconds at Alcazar*, 2004, a video installation that recreates the scene from Diego Velázquez's 17th-century masterpiece, *Las Meninas* as a realistic moving image.

Each of these highlighted works puts pressure on contemporary notions of authenticity, veracity, historicism, and originality. In doing so, they create a sense of discomfort that asks viewers to examine more deeply the widespread impulse to accept presented facts and images at face value.

A 300-page, fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition; it includes essays by Armstrong and by contributors D. Graham Burnett, of Princeton University; Mark Levy, California State University; Tom Gunning, University of Chicago; Carrie Lambert-Beatty, Harvard University; Norman Klein, California Institute of the Arts; and Glenn Lowry, Museum of Modern Art.

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## **ABOUT THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS**

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA), home to one of the finest encyclopedic art collections in the country, houses more than 80,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history. Highlights of the permanent collection include European masterworks by Rembrandt, Poussin, and van Gogh; modern and contemporary painting and sculpture by Picasso, Matisse, Mondrian, Stella, and Close; as well as internationally significant collections of prints and drawings, decorative arts, Modernist design, photographs, textiles, and Asian, African, and Native American art. General admission is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee. Museum hours: Sunday, 11 A.M.–5 P.M.; Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, 10 A.M.–5 P.M.; Thursday, 10 A.M.–9 P.M.; Monday closed. For more information, call (612) 870-3000 or visit [www.artsmia.org](http://www.artsmia.org).