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PHILLIPS COLLECTION DEBUTS INTERSECTIONS, A NEW CONTEMPORARY ART SERIES

Series Embraces Collection's Legacy as "An Intimate Museum Combined with an Experiment Station"

Washington, D.C.—This fall, The Phillips Collection unveils *Intersections*, a new series of contemporary art projects that champion the experimental spirit of museum founder Duncan Phillips. The ongoing series opens in October and November 2009 with projects by Jennifer Wen Ma, Barbara Liotta, and Tayo Heuser.



Courtesy of Jennifer Wen Ma

Intersections invites artists to respond to artwork and spaces in the museum with projects of their own, revealing relationships between modern and contemporary art. Many *Intersections* projects riff on the intimate nature of the museum's architecture, engaging spaces not typically considered exhibition areas, such as the museum's stairwell, courtyard, and walkways between buildings, among others. (*this is not that Café*, a project by dBfoundation, is currently underway in the

museum's café.) By activating these unconventional spaces, *Intersections* challenges visitors' expectations of how and where they experience art. These unexpected encounters create new relationships, with surprises of their own.

An opening on Nov. 19 will celebrate the series and the first three projects. Ma, Liotta, and Heuser will share the inspiration behind their site-specific works in discussions with Vesela Sretenovic, curator of modern and contemporary art.

"*Intersections* invites the living artist to engage creatively with the rich modernist collection at The Phillips Collection. Collaborating with our curator, Vesela Sretenovic, the artists respond to specific works of art as well as the idiosyncratic spaces of our intimate galleries," says Dorothy Kosinski, director of The Phillips Collection. "Duncan Phillips was thrilled by contemporary art, and we are excited to embrace this aspect of the institution's mission and personality."

Museum founder Duncan Phillips, who referred to his museum as an experiment station welcoming new and startling manifestations of art, believed it to be a laboratory. His installations were radical, ignoring the considerations of nationality and chronology that traditionally shaped art museum displays. Intersections builds on this feature of the museum, as well as on Phillips's legacy of active engagement with the artists of his time, reigniting relationships with artists both local and international, emerging and established.

Intersections is organized by Vesela Sretenovic, the Phillips's curator of modern and contemporary art. The first three Intersections projects are *Brain Storm*, *Icarus*, and *Pulse*.

BRAIN STORM BY JENNIFER WEN MA
OCT. 15, 2009—JAN. 3, 2010

In this video projection with sound, a man and horse traverse a rough, stormy landscape, suggesting the unpredictable and uneven nature of an inner journey. *Brain Storm*, commissioned for Guggenheim Bilbao in 2009, will be on display in the Phillips house, in conversation with artwork that evokes spatial or temporal travel: landscapes by Paul Cézanne, Arthur Dove, and Wassily Kandinsky. Video stills from *Brain Storm*, printed on transparent film, will be affixed to the glass sides of a walkway connecting the house to the museum's newer buildings, reinforcing the notion of travel.

Ma works in media including video and film, drawing, fashion design, architectural installation, and public art. Ma was born in Beijing, China, and moved to the United States in 1986. She served as a member of the core creative team for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, and as its chief designer for visual and special effects. Ma's public artworks are displayed at the Beijing Center for the Arts and National Art Museum of China. *Brain Storm* is presented in collaboration with [Transformer](#) gallery and [Shigeo Bork Mu Project](#), in conjunction with *Ink Storm*, an exhibition curated by Ma on view at Transformer from Sept. 18 to Oct. 31, 2009. Ma shares the inspiration behind *Brain Storm* and its connection to artwork in The Phillips Collection in an Artist's Perspective on Oct. 15. Her Web site is www.littlemeat.net.

ICARUS BY BARBARA LIOTTA
OCT. 22, 2009—JAN. 31, 2010

Liotta conceived *Icarus* as a portrait of human energy and inner strength, and as a symbol of flight and aspiration. The sculpture's black strings, woven with irregular red-and-black stones, will suspend from the ceiling in the main gallery of the Phillips house. Its delicate strings will react to the rhythms and vibrations of the installation site, animating the space it occupies. *Icarus* will be juxtaposed with portraits from the museum's permanent collection, including Eugène Delacroix's *Paganini*, Amedeo Modigliani's *Elena Povolozky*, and Chaim Soutine's *Woman in Profile*.

Liotta is known for her abstract sculptures of elusive simplicity. She lives and works in Washington, D.C., and her work is featured in collections nationally and

internationally, including D.C.'s Corcoran Gallery of Art, Montgomery College in Maryland, and the United States Embassies in Greece and Albania. Liotta and Sretenovic discuss Liotta's sources in the museum and the creative process behind her work.

Artwork by Liotta is on display in a solo show at D.C.'s [Reyes + Davis](#) gallery, from Oct. 23 to Nov. 27, 2009. A dancer from the Washington Ballet will perform a specially choreographed dance in response to *Icarus* on Jan. 14 and Jan. 21, 2010, at the museum.

**PULSE BY TAYO HEUSER
NOV. 19, 2009–OCT. 31, 2010**

Heuser has translated the luminosity of Mark Rothko's paintings into three dimensions with large-scale, wall-mounted sculptures that will be installed in the museum's elliptical stairwell. These glowing, colored forms, crafted from handmade paper and drawn in ink, will seem to float against the walls, making the spiral flow of the stairwell resonate with the light and airiness of Rothko's paintings.

Heuser is best known for her large-scale, pen-and-ink drawings on highly polished and shimmering paper, the result of coating and burnishing according to an old Arabic tradition. Heuser was born in Washington D.C., and grew up in Africa and Europe. Her work is in numerous public and corporate collections, including the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, Calif.; the Lerner Corporation, Washington D.C.; and the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Providence, R.I. She works in Brussels and Rhode Island.

UPCOMING INTERSECTIONS PROJECTS

Linn Meyers
Feb. 11–May 2, 2010

Kate Shepherd
June 10–Sept 5, 2010

Jae Ko
Oct. 1, 2010–Jan. 2, 2011

Alyson Shotz
Summer 2010

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

The Phillips Collection offers an intimate encounter with one of the finest collections of impressionist and modern American and European art, with works by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Vincent van Gogh, Edgar Degas, Henri Matisse, Pierre Bonnard, Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee, Claude Monet, Honoré Daumier, Georgia O'Keeffe, Arthur Dove, Mark Rothko, Milton Avery, Jacob Lawrence, and Richard Diebenkorn, among others. The Phillips Collection, America's first museum of modern art, has an active collecting program and regularly organizes acclaimed special

exhibitions, many of which travel nationally and internationally. The museum also produces award-winning and in-depth education programs for K–12 teachers and students, as well as for adults. Its Center for the Study of Modern Art explores new way of thinking about art and the nature of creativity, through artist visits, seminars, and classes. Since 1941, the museum has hosted concerts in its wood-paneled Music Room. The Phillips Collection is a private, non-government museum supported primarily by donations.

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