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October 22, 2018

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NATURE + ART + CLIMATE + CHANGE: INTERNATIONAL FORUM IN WASHINGTON

**The Phillips Collection and University of Maryland present Hannes Koch
and Florian Ortkrass, and Henry Elkus in conversation**

WASHINGTON—Academic and artistic partners The Phillips Collection and the University of Maryland (UMD) will present the International Forum in Washington on **Saturday, November 10, 2018, 2–5 pm.**

The Phillips Collection's annual International Forum is rooted in the institution's aim to contribute to the global conversation through the language of modern and contemporary art. A joint presentation with the University of Maryland, this year's afternoon of dialogue will bring together leaders across disciplines to discuss the implications and meaning of "Nature + Art + Climate + Change."



Random International, *Rain Room* (2012), Barbican, London; MoMA, New York; Yuz M, Shanghai; LACMA, Los Angeles; The Maxine and Stuart Frankel Foundation for Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

The program will include presentations by Meg Webster, Hannes Koch and Florian Ortkrass (founders of Random International and creators of *Rain Room*), and a presentation by Henry Elkus (CEO of Helena) about Helena's support of Factory in the Sky, the first commercial direct-air carbon capture machine, located in Switzerland. The presentations by Random International and Henry Elkus will be followed by one-on-one conversations with UMD scholars, including Dr. Hester Baer (Associate Professor and Head of the German Department) and Dr. Robert Orr (Dean of the School of Public Policy and former Assistant Secretary-

General for Policy Planning, United Nations). Conversations will explore shared perspectives on the increasingly significant role artists are playing in discourse about the environment.

“Our position as an arts institution in the nation’s capital provides us with a unique platform to discuss pressing contemporary and global issues. The Phillips Collection is pleased to host this discussion surrounding the intersections of art, nature, and climate, which will be informed by some of the most important artists and visionaries addressing these topics,” said **Vradenburg Director and CEO Dorothy Kosinski**.

“The University of Maryland's partnership with The Phillips Collection is rooted in the idea that scholarship and the arts work hand-in-hand to advance dialogue on important, global issues. We are pleased that our scholars will be contributing to these important conversations on art, nature, and climate alongside key thought leaders, and look forward to the discussions that unfold,” said **UMD Senior Vice President and Provost Mary Ann Rankin**

ABOUT MEG WEBSTER

Meg Webster is a San Francisco-born, New York-based artist recognized for her work in sculpture and installation that evoke a connection between the Earth’s environment and elements of existence. For 40 years, Webster has utilized spaces with totemic qualities and natural materials like stone, soil, ash, beeswax, and spices to continue the conversation about social relations to the environment. Her large-scale installations and precise structures inspired by the 1970’s Land Art Movement often reflect basic forms and minimalism.

ABOUT HANNES KOCH AND FLORIAN ORTKRASS

Hannes Koch and Florian Ortkrass founded Random International in 2005, an art collective and collaborative studio for experimental practice. Combining Koch’s and Ortkrass’s passion for art and science, the collective’s work encourages and welcomes active participation in questioning aspects of identity and autonomy in the post-digital age. The studio is based in London and continues to grow a talented and diverse team.

Their most recent work is the permanent installation *Rain Room*—a large-scale environment of responsive rainfall. Using digital technology, *Rain Room* offers visitors the experience of controlling rainfall, creating a unique choreographed downpour and encouraging visitors to interact in a unexpected space and atmosphere. *Rain Room* is in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art’s permanent collection but has also been exhibited at the YUZ Museum in Shanghai (2015), the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013), and London's Barbican (2012).

ABOUT HENRY ELKUS

Founder and CEO of the Helena Group Foundation Henry Elkus is passionate about creating systems that can be leveraged to enact global, scalable, and systemic change. The Helena Group Foundation consists of leaders across the globe and each member represents a specific field. Members include General Stanley McChrystal, actress Chloe Grace Moretz, Nobel Laureate Myron Scholes, and producer Brian Grazer, along with Fortune 500 executives, technologists, and acclaimed activists. The group develops and implements strategies that can produce positive change for the world. Outside of running Helena, Elkus is also a social entrepreneur resident at the Boston Consulting Group, holds an advisory role at the Berggruen Institute, and serves as a Special Advisor to the forthcoming Avatar Technology Xprize.

Admission for the event is \$12; free for students and Phillips members. Tickets for the event can be purchased at <http://www.phillipscollection.org/events/2018-11-10-international-forum>

ABOUT THE PHILLIPS COLLECTION

The Phillips Collection, America's first museum of Modern art, presents one of the world's most distinguished Impressionist and American Modern art collections. Including paintings by Renoir and Rothko, Bonnard and O'Keeffe, van Gogh, Diebenkorn, Daumier and Lawrence, among others, the museum continues to actively collect new acquisitions, many by contemporary artists such as Wolfgang Laib, Whitfield Lovell, Zilia Sánchez, and Leo Villareal. Its distinctive building combines extensive new galleries with the former home of its founder, Duncan Phillips. The Phillips's impact spreads nationally and internationally through its highly distinguished special exhibitions, programs, and events that catalyze dialogue surrounding the continuity between art of the past and the present. Among the Phillips's esteemed programs are its award-winning education programs for educators, students, and adults; well-established Phillips Music series; and sell-out Phillips after 5 events. The museum contributes to the art conversation on a global scale with events like Conversations with Artists and the International Forum. The Phillips Collection values its community partnerships with the University of Maryland—the museum's nexus for academic work, scholarly exchange, and interdisciplinary collaborations—and THEARC—the museum's new campus serving the Southeast DC community. The Phillips Collection is a private, non-government museum, supported primarily by donations.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

The University of Maryland is the state's flagship university and one of the nation's preeminent public research universities. A global leader in research, entrepreneurship and innovation, the university is home to more than 37,000 students, 9,000 faculty and staff, and 250 academic programs. Its faculty includes three Nobel laureates, three Pulitzer Prize winners, 47 members of the national academies and scores of Fulbright scholars. The institution has a \$1.8 billion operating budget and secures \$550 million annually in external research funding. For more information about the University of Maryland, visit www.umd.edu.

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