



PRESS RELEASE

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The Williams College Museum of Art Presents

Painting Between the Lines

February 16–June 9, 2013

Images available upon request.

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Williamstown, Mass. — *Painting Between the Lines*, investigates the relationship between literature and art by commissioning 14 contemporary artists to create paintings based on descriptions of paintings in historical and contemporary novels. The exhibition will be on view at the Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) from February 16 through June 9, 2013 and is the inspiration for the February 21 *WCMA at Night: Lit Café*, an evening of art, music, and fun activities, which will take place from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. This event is free and all are invited to attend.

Even though writing and painting have been connected throughout history, literature has of late become a diminished subject in the medium of painting, which has looked more to history, society, politics and itself for inspiration. Through reintroducing literature as a viable subject for painting, this exhibition looks at the relationship between these two artistic fields, their different modes of representation, the various ways text can be translated into image, and how they both, in unique ways, have the ability to elicit a response from those who engage with them.

Through an examination of how contemporary artists look at storytelling, literature, and writing as expressions of individual thought, *Painting Between the Lines* provides a look into the state of contemporary painting today and attests to the vitality of the medium, presenting some of its most innovative practitioners. The artists in the exhibition work across a number of different forms and styles and are based in the United States and Europe.

The choice of the novels has been central to the commissioning process. Many of these imagined paintings have been envisaged in exhaustive detail, they informed the texture of the novels and provided background details, while others play a pivotal role in plot or character development. Such diverse authors as Samuel Beckett, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Albert Camus, and Marcel Proust among others have placed paintings into their fictitious worlds. However, while the descriptions of these paintings may be vivid, they remain open to interpretation in their physical forms by the artists.

In *Painting Between the Lines* each painting will be paired with the respective text as well as a copy of the first edition of the book. Much like the act of reading itself, the visitor can observe the painting while reading the writer's description of the artwork and see an actual copy of the book the text was first published in. WCMA will also have a small lending library where visitors can check out the books that inspired the artists in the exhibition.

A publication accompanies the exhibition featuring images of all the newly commissioned paintings and descriptions of the paintings, as well as an essay by the curator on the relationship between painting and literature.

Painting Between the Lines was organized by the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, and curated by Jens Hoffmann. Lead sponsorship of *Painting Between the Lines* is generously provided by the Fiorucci Art Trust. Additional support has been provided by Laura & Joe Sweeney, the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in San Francisco, and the Netherlands Cultural Services.

The Artists and Authors

Laylah Ali

Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*

Michaël Borremans

Günter Grass, *The Tin Drum*

Marcel Dzama

Haruki Murakami, *Kafka on the Shore*

Cecilia Edefalk

August Strindberg, *The Red Room*

Jordan Kantor

Albert Camus, *Exile and the Kingdom*
Michael van Ofen
Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*
Laura Owens
Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*
Clare Rojas
Marcel Proust, *Swann's Way*
Wilhelm Sasnal
Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*
Maaïke Schoorel
Daphne du Maurier, *Rebecca*
Norbert Schwontkowski
Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*
Raqib Shaw
Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*
Fred Tomaselli
Samuel Beckett, *Watt*
Jakub Julian Ziolkowski
Sándor Márai, *Embers*

WCMA at Night

Expect the unexpected as artists, musicians, dancers, writers, students, and others re-imagine the museum as a site for connection, collaboration, and art-making. Each night has a unique theme, with different ways to get involved, exchange ideas, and make your mark.

Thursday, February 21, 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. / *WCMA at Night: Lit Café*

Art provides the creative spark as you caffeinate, percolate, and put pen to paper. Join in with an "open-mic" label contest featuring visitor-submitted creative writing inspired by art in the galleries. Sample acoustic music, spoken word, bookmaking, spine poetry, art-making, and more. To participate in our book exchange to benefit local libraries, bring two books and take one home.

Williams College Museum of Art

The Williams College Museum of Art is located on Main Street in Williamstown, Massachusetts. It is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday from 1 to 5 pm. The museum is wheelchair accessible and open to the public. Admission is FREE. For more information, contact the museum at (413) 597-2429 or visit wcma.williams.edu.

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