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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis Announces Upcoming Exhibitions
Richard Aldrich and the 19th Century French Painting
and
Manon de Boer: Between Perception and Sensation

And a new season of the Front Room

January 21 – May 1, 2011

Opening Night: Friday, January 21, 2011, 7:00-9:00 pm



Richard Aldrich, *Narrative with Syd Barrett, Robert Smithson, John Cale, Patty Waters, Daan Van Golden, Richard Aldrich and Can*, 2008. Collage on linen, 84 x 58 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami Gallery.



Manon de Boer, *Attica*, 2008. 16mm black and white film or 16mm black and white film transferred to video with mono sound, 10 minutes. Courtesy of Jan Mot, Brussels.



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Richard Aldrich and the 19th Century French Painting

January 21 – May 1, 2011



Richard Aldrich, *If I Paint Crowned I've Had It, Got Me*, 2008. Oil and wax on wood, on cut linen, 84 x 58 inches. Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami Gallery.

January 2011 - Over the past decade, Richard Aldrich (b. 1975, Virginia) has assiduously orchestrated an eclectic body of work that reveals, in all its variation, a consistent sensibility: a keen appreciation for the complex disposition of painting and its potential to reveal the intimate and nuanced experiences that exist outside language. For his first solo museum exhibition, on view from January 21, 2011 through May 1, 2011, the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis presents nearly twenty of the artist's large-scale works, produced over the last several years that span abstraction, figuration, "object-paintings," and text-based canvases. The Contemporary is also very pleased to announce a special collaboration on this occasion of this show: with the generous cooperation of the [Saint Louis Art Museum](#), Aldrich will present, alongside his own works, a selection of 19th and 20th century painting from the museum's permanent collection. Taken together, this exhibition proposes a dialogue between painterly histories and social gestures, through the adventurous vision and diverse practice of one of the foremost figures in a new generation of painting.



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Aldrich makes paintings, large and small, that range from effusive and flurried abstractions; spare object-based canvases; and graphic, melancholic figuration. While certain works might suggest familiar tropes within painting's recent history, Aldrich revels in the vulnerability of assumed certainties, and he actively refuses facile stylizations or predictable forms. He works on primed linen with a mixture of oil paint, mineral spirits, and wax, regularly shifting from large, tenderly gestural paintings to thrifty canvases that hold fragments of cloth or wood. In other works, he emphasizes abutting or layered passages of color for dense abstraction. Aldrich is recognized for a deep engagement with the aesthetics of painting's recent history, often drawing from historical stratagems to build a correspondence between distinct forms and narratives. However, his painting remains rooted not to a reiteration of history, but to his own story, and to what he calls "the otherworldliness of experience." Alongside his rendering of familiar techniques, his practice also assumes systems of repetition, self-quotation, and translation; and with each retelling, our grasp on the knowable or familiar is loosened in exchange for a heightened awareness of form.

Aldrich's practice is both decidedly literary and deeply personal, focusing on relationships, routine experience, and reading as the subjects for his paintings. The works themselves are deeply interconnected, drawing together elements of the studio, and the cosmos of canvas scraps and books that fill it. From a color slide, a page of prose, or even a sliver from a discarded frame, Aldrich repositions these objects as protagonists on the canvas. His poetry and meandering fairytales, as well as his music (Aldrich plays solo and participates in the band Hurrah with a group of fellow New York artists), also inform his painting. These and others form a technical arsenal comprising a sincere and unflinching curiosity; a will to push painting forward; and a foothold between innocence and understanding.

The paintings in this exhibition take over half of the Contemporary's Main Galleries to showcase the startling breadth of Aldrich's aesthetic investigations. In his most comprehensive installation to date, Aldrich arranges his large canvases to reveal intricate relationships and persistent correspondence between the works. To amplify this focus on hidden connections among the works in his show, Aldrich has curated a complementary selection of early modern paintings from the collection of the Saint Louis Art Museum. Exploring the communicative possibilities of different histories and gestures, the artist uncovers idiosyncratic works of art and unexpected juxtapositions, inviting Contemporary visitors to consider how a narrative develops from the process of looking. Presented as an exhibition-within-exhibition, he explores stories that might go untold but are present nonetheless, considering the life of

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an art object outside traditional contexts. Paired with his own exhibition of works, Aldrich presents a playful installation that considers the magic of and new possibilities for painting today.

Richard Aldrich

Richard Aldrich was born in 1975 in Hampton, Virginia, and he currently lives and works in Brooklyn. He has presented his work throughout Europe and the U.S., at institutions including White Columns, New York; Midway Contemporary Art Center, Minneapolis; Palais De Tokyo, Paris; Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; and P.S.1 Center for Contemporary Art, Long Island City, New York. He recently presented new work at the 2010 *Whitney Biennial*.

Richard Aldrich is curated by Laura Fried, Associate Curator, and organized by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis.

Richard Aldrich is generously supported by Mari Carmen and Jose R. Alvarez; Manuel Gonzalez and Avo Samuelian; Craig Jacobson; and Scott J. Lorinsky. Special thanks to Bortolami Gallery, New York.

The Saint Louis Art Museum

The Saint Louis Art Museum is one of the nation's leading comprehensive art museums with collections that include works of art of exceptional quality from virtually every culture and time period. Areas of notable depth include Oceanic art, pre-Columbian art, ancient Chinese bronzes and European and American art of the late 19th and 20th centuries, with particular strength in 20th-century German art. The Museum offers a full range of exhibitions and educational programming generated independently and in collaboration with local, national and international partners.

Manon de Boer: Between Perception and Sensation

January 21 – May 1, 2011



Manon de Boer, *Presto, Perfect Sound*, 2006. 35 mm color film or 35 mm color film transferred to video with sound, 5 minutes 40 seconds. Courtesy of Jan Mot, Brussels.

January 2011 - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis presents the first major exhibition in the U.S. of the work of acclaimed Dutch, Brussels-based artist Manon de Boer.

Manon de Boer (b. 1966, Kodaikanal, India) has crafted a unique and influential cinematic language that for over a decade has been defined by narratives of time, memory, and the relationship between sound and image. Central to her work is a keen focus on the temporal dimensions of portraiture, as she depicts friends, writers, dancers, composers, and musicians on film to capture the nature of memory and the passage of time. Alongside a documentarian strain that threads through her work, De Boer has also reconceived the structures of sound and musical composition to explore how they transform cinematic perception. For De Boer's first solo exhibition in an American museum, the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis presents four key works that address the artist's attention to musical structures on film. Exploring notions of performance—and the ways that sound can give a film its form—this exhibition spotlights De Boer's expansive and grounding experimentations with sound, image, and the conditions of cinema.

For her filmic portrait, *Presto, Perfect Sound* (2006), De Boer invited Brussels-based violinist George Van Dam to play the fourth movement (Presto) of Béla Bartók's notoriously difficult Sonata for Solo



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Violin Sz117. De Boer shot six takes of the full performance using 35mm stock, out of which she cut and then reconstructed the optimal sound composites to produce a “perfect performance.” Reversing the conventional image-sound hierarchy, De Boer then synchronized the image to sound. What we hear is an expertly executed sonata whose visual glitches betray the constructed nature of near perfection, restoring our attention to the tensions of Van Dam’s playing. *Two Times 4’33”* (2007) features the Brussels-based pianist Jean-Luc Fafchamps as he plays John Cage’s famed composition twice in front of his audience. Meandering slowly across the pianist and crowd, and out into the world beyond the studio, De Boer’s camera fixes its gaze on the palpability of silence: on film and in the body, as it reverberates through the audience and extends to us off screen. *Attica* (2008) was the result of collaboration with several musicians, for which de Boer staged a performance of Frederic Rzewski’s compositions *Attica* and *Coming Together* (both 1972). Rzewski’s music, a response to the infamous prison riots in New York the year before, assumes a circular structure of euphoric crescendo and resolution—and De Boer absorbs the composition’s mirrored nature within the spatial dynamics of her black and white film. Finally, for De Boer’s newest film, *Dissonant* (2010), the Rosas-dancer Cynthia Loemij responds to Eugène Ysaÿe’s *Three Sonatas for Violin Solo*, by dancing in silence after the music has stopped. The intimate soundtrack of Loemij’s footsteps continues when the screen goes black, and as De Boer changes the roll of film, the viewer trades vision for the pure experience of sound.

In an ambitious installation conceived especially for the Contemporary’s galleries, the four works are orchestrated side-by-side. Through distinct ruptures of image and sound, each portrait amplifies an intricate play between image and sound, around performer and audience, and the complex and collaborative dimension of De Boer’s practice. Taking over one-half of the museum’s exhibition space, this exhibition asks us to revisit the process of looking and listening, through the artist’s singular interrogation of the filmic medium.

Manon de Boer

Manon de Boer was born in 1966 in India, and currently lives and works in Brussels. Her work has been exhibited internationally, most recently at the Seoul Museum of Art; the 29th *Sao Paulo Biennial*; Centro Andaluz de Arte Contemporaneo, Sevilla; the Centre Pompidou; 2008 *Berlin Biennial*; the 2007 *Venice Biennale*; and her films have also been included in numerous film festivals in Hong Kong, Marseille, Rotterdam, and Vienna. Her work has been the subject of monographic exhibitions at Witte de With in



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Rotterdam and the Frankfurter Kunstverein, among others. De Boer has also presented her work in group exhibitions throughout the U.S. and Europe, including P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York; Frac Lorraine, Metz; Shanghai Art Museum; Pallas Contemporary Projects, Dublin; Nikolaj, Copenhagen Contemporary Art Center; Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade; and the Tate Modern, London; among many others. She currently teaches at the Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten in Ghent. She is currently preparing a new solo exhibition at the South London Gallery, London.

While Manon de Boer has become a well-known and respected artist in Belgium and throughout Europe—gaining acclaim through recent major exhibitions at MuHKA Museum in Antwerp and the Frankfurter Kunstverein—she has only recently begun to gain recognition in the United States. This feature exhibition in Saint Louis provides a significant platform to introduce her work to a broad American audience.

Manon de Boer is curated by Laura Fried, Associate Curator, and João Ribas, Curator at the MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge. The exhibition is organized by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis.

Manon de Boer is generously supported by Mondriaan Foundation, Amsterdam.

CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM ST. LOUIS

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis promotes meaningful engagement with the most relevant and innovative art being made today. Founded as the Forum for Contemporary Art in 1980, the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis re-opened in its current location, 3750 Washington Blvd. St. Louis, Missouri 63108, with a new 27,000 square foot building in 2003. As a non-collecting institution, the Contemporary focuses its efforts on featuring local, national and international, well-known and newly established artists from diverse backgrounds, working in all types of media. As St. Louis' forum for interpreting culture through contemporary visual art, the Contemporary connects visitors to the dynamic art and ideas of our times. As a gathering place for experiencing contemporary art and culture, the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis pushes the boundaries of innovation, creativity, and expression. Visit the Contemporary's website at www.camstl.org.

Website: www.camstl.org

Blog: www.2buildings1blog.org

Facebook: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

Twitter: @contemporarystl

The Front Room

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis is pleased to announce a new season of The Front Room. Running parallel to the Main Galleries, The Front Room operates at a different speed, featuring films, performance, painting, sculpture, sound, photography, and new installations, each lasting a few weeks at a time.

January 21 - Feb 20

John Opera & Matt Sheridan Smith

February 22 - March 20

Thea Djordjandze & George Maciunus

March 8 - 27

Margaret Salmon

March 22 - April 17

Pavel Büchler

April 7 - 17 (live performance on April 7)

Tallervo Kalleinen and Olivier Kochta-Kalleinen: The St. Louis Complaint Choir

April 19 - May 15

Scott King & Richard Serra

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