

## Miami Art Museum Presents

### The Wilderness

March 27 - June 26, 2011



Christy Gast, *Batty Cave*, 2010. Three-channel HD video installation, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Diet, Miami Dade County.

**MIAMI – February 04, 2011** – Miami Art Museum presents *The Wilderness*, a thematic group exhibition exploring the real or imagined boundaries between tamed and untamed nature. On view March 27 through June 26, 2011, the exhibition grapples with competing definitions of “wildness,” pitting traditional conceptions of a chaotic, primordial realm that awaits human subjugation against the idea of a self-regulating order that courses through the natural world.

“The works included in *The Wilderness* raise fundamental questions about humanity’s relationship with nature,” said MAM Associate Curator René Morales, curator of the exhibition. “In different ways, each work dramatically underscores the intertwinement of nature and the human sphere, while evoking some of the psychological, political, ethical and ecological ramifications of our historical tendency to conceive of them as separate entities.”

*The Wilderness* features a focused selection of film and sculptural installations, each with its own dedicated space, by artists Darren Almond, David Brooks, Tacita Dean, Christy Gast and Allan McCollum – in addition to works by Matthew Buckingham, Aramis Gutierrez and Fernando Ortega.

At the center of the exhibition is a large-scale installation by Allan McCollum titled *The Event: Petrified Lightning from Central Florida (with Supplemental Didactics)* (1998). To create this ambitious work, the artist joined forces with a team of geologists and electrical engineers from the University of Florida’s International Center for Lightning Research and Testing near the small town of Starke, Florida. McCollum and his collaborators spent several weeks triggering lightning strikes with the use of small rockets, which were attached to copper wires that directed the lightning bolts down to containers filled with sand from the area. The process resulted in the creation of numerous “fulgurites” – small glass objects that bear the same form of the bolts that created them. The artist then worked with a local souvenir manufacturer to create thousands of replicas of a single, selected fulgurite, which are arranged in a jaw-dropping display together with thousands of specially produced booklets dealing with fulgurites, lightning and the project itself.

In collaboration with the Florida Keys Wild Bird Center, CasaLin Pine Rocklands and the de la Cruz Collection's artist-in-residence program, David Brooks created a new, site-specific commission for the exhibition. Titled *Still Life with Stampede and Wild Seabirds*, the project poignantly juxtaposes the wildlife of our imaginations (represented here by the type of concrete animal sculptures that adorn many South Florida lawns) with the real wildlife that struggles daily to survive amid and at the edges of the local urban environment.

In Darren Almond's eerie video installation *Arctic Pull* (2003), a lone figure is seen laboriously dragging a sledge across the permafrost while battling the intense wind, cold and gloom of a pitch-dark Siberian night. The work poetically recalls the harrowing journeys of Arctic explorers in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries while suggesting, in a broader sense, the historical trope of humanity's epic struggle to conquer the world's unknown territories.

Another major work in the exhibition is Christy Gast's *Batty Cave* (2010). In this three-channel video installation, the artist uses rocks, scraps of wood and bits of broken glass to relay a folkloric narrative of two men who built an ark in a dusty, remote mountain cave deep in the Utah desert, in preparation for a second biblical flood that they believed would wash away the human world.

*The Wilderness* also features Tacita Dean's ethereal 16mm film *Banewl* (1999), in which the quiet calm of a rural pasture is gradually disturbed by the onset of a solar eclipse. Several moments before the eclipse occurs, the behavior of the animals in the scene becomes erratic, providing subtle testimony to the mysterious levels of perception that animate the natural order – the secret presence of wildness that courses through even the tamest of landscapes, just beyond the thresholds of human comprehension.

Miami Art Museum will offer special tours and discounts for members of local environmental and conservation organizations. For participation information visit [miamiartmuseum.org](http://miamiartmuseum.org) or email [tbelcher@miamiartmuseum.org](mailto:tbelcher@miamiartmuseum.org).

### **Exhibition Organization and Support**

*The Wilderness* is organized by Miami Art Museum and curated by MAM Associate Curator René Morales. It is supported by donations to MAM's Annual Exhibition Fund and by Amuse Restaurant & Lounge - Tempo Miami. Educational content of this program is made possible with support from Espirito Santo Bank. Special thanks to the Florida Keys Wild Bird Center, the de la Cruz Collection and CasaLin.



### **Miami Art Museum**

Miami Art Museum, a modern and contemporary art museum located in downtown Miami, FL, is dedicated to collecting and exhibiting international art of the 20th and 21st centuries with an emphasis on the cultures of the Atlantic Rim—the Americas, Europe and Africa—from which the vast majority of Miami residents hail. Recently, Miami Art Museum has presented exhibitions of works by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, Carlos Cruz-Diez, Quisqueya Henriquez, Guillermo Kuitca, Wifredo Lam, Susan Rothenberg and Yinka Shonibare, and its Permanent Collection includes works by Doug Aitken, José Bedia, Mark Dion, Marcel Duchamp, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Ann Hamilton, Arturo Herrera, Alfredo Jaar, Sol LeWitt, Vik Muniz, Wangechi Mutu, Robert Rauschenberg, Gerhard Richter, James Rosenquist, Tomas Saraceno, Lorna Simpson and Rachel Whiteread. Miami Art Museum's educational programming currently reaches more than 30,000 people every year, with the largest art education program outside the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. The new Miami Art Museum at Museum Park, designed by Herzog & de Meuron, is scheduled to open to the public in 2013. The new facility will provide room to showcase growing collections, expanded exhibition space to bring more world-class exhibitions to Miami-Dade County, and an educational complex. For more information about Miami Art Museum, visit [miamiartmuseum.org](http://miamiartmuseum.org) or call 305.375.3000.

Accredited by the American Association of Museums, Miami Art Museum is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts; with the support of Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners. Miami Art Museum is an accessible facility. For sign language interpretation or assistive listening devices please call Miami Art Museum's education department 305.375.4073 at least five days in advance. Materials in accessible format may be requested.

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## RELATED EVENTS

### **MAM @ Books & Books: Reading Art**

Tuesday, March 22, 2011 | 6:30-8pm

*Landscape and Memory* by Simon Schama (1995). The group meets every other month to discuss art books in a range of different genres including classics, critical books, biographies, mysteries and even an occasional scandalous story. To register, please contact [education@miamiartmuseum.org](mailto:education@miamiartmuseum.org) or 305.375.4073.

### ***The Wilderness***

**Opening reception and artist talk with David Brooks, Christy Gast and Allan McCollum**

**Saturday, March 26, 2011 | 6-9pm**

**Talk begins 6pm, doors open 5:30pm (Seating is limited. First come, first seated.)**

**MAM members free, Non-members \$20**

**RSVP to [RSVP@miamiartmuseum.org](mailto:RSVP@miamiartmuseum.org)**

*The Wilderness*, a thematic group exhibition about the real or imagined boundaries between tamed and untamed nature, opens with an artist talk with David Brooks, Christy Gast and Allan McCollum. *The Wilderness*, on view March 27 – June 27, 2011, is organized by Miami Art Museum and supported by donations to MAM's Annual Exhibition Fund and by Amuse Restaurant & Lounge - Tempo Miami. Educational content of this program is made possible with support from Espirito Santo Bank. Special thanks to the Florida Keys Wild Bird Center, the de la Cruz Collection and CasaLin.



### **Regarding Nature: Tours of *The Wilderness* and Dion's *South Florida Wildlife Rescue Unit* First and Third Sundays | 2pm**

- Sunday, April 3 and 17
- Sunday, May 1 and 15
- Sunday, June 5 and 19

Miami Art Museum will offer docent-led tours of *The Wilderness* and *Anchor Gallery: Mark Dion* every first and third Sunday at 2pm. Visitors will explore the boundaries between tamed and untamed nature as well as human attempts to control the South Florida ecosystem. Tours are free with museum admission. For more information, contact [education@miamiartmuseum.org](mailto:education@miamiartmuseum.org) or 305.375.4073.

### **Public Tours**

**Sundays | 2pm**

Museum tours, free with museum admission, are offered Sundays at 2pm. Museum visitors meet in the lobby. Thematic tours are offered periodically to correspond with current exhibitions. (See Regarding Nature tours.)

**Group Tours**

Docent-led tours in English or Spanish can be scheduled upon request. Contact Miami Art Museum's education department at 305.375.4073 for additional information.

**Second Saturdays are Free for Families presented by MetLife Foundation****Second Saturday of every month | 1–4pm**

Drop in to enjoy fun, interactive programs. Families of all ages explore Miami Art Museum together, find inspiration to create works of art, and participate in hands-on activities led by education staff.

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**Hours:** Tuesday - Friday, 10am - 5pm  
Saturday & Sunday, noon - 5pm  
Closed Mondays

**Admission:** Free for MAM members, children under 12 & students with ID  
Free admission every second Saturday  
Adults \$8  
Seniors \$4

**Parking:** \$5 (with museum validation) at 50 NW 2nd Ave.  
Metro: Government Center Station.

Miami Art Museum | 101 West Flagler Street | Miami, FL 33130 | 305.375.3000 | [miamiartmuseum.org](http://miamiartmuseum.org)