

# MATTEAWAN GALLERY

## de•con•struct

Curated by Krista Svalbonas

Janice Caswell  
Emily Hass  
Ryan Sarah Murphy  
Cat Poljski  
Krista Svalbonas

July 11 - August 30, 2015

Opening reception Saturday, July 11, 6-9 pm

Matteawan Gallery is pleased to present de•con•struct, an exhibition of drawing, collage, photography, and mixed-media works by Janice Caswell, Emily Hass, Ryan Sarah Murphy, Cat Poljski, and Krista Svalbonas. The exhibition is curated by Krista Svalbonas and features artists who explore notions of memory, identity, and temporality through a process of deconstructing and reassembling architectural imagery.

Janice Caswell removes architectural structures from their original context by covering sections of photographs with a thin layer of white paint. The resulting abstracted image contains traces of information about a place or building, while calling attention to certain shapes or architectural details. Caswell often focuses on imperfect structures that are functional and seem to have evolved organically. For her, this process transforms, even redeems, objects overlooked in the everyday, revealing their beauty and character, and giving them newfound purpose.

Emily Hass explores history through the use of architecture in her work. Her gouache on paper drawings reference the buildings occupied by her family, other Jews, and persecuted artists and intellectuals who were forced to leave Germany in the late 1930s. In the series *Exiles*, Hass refers to the original architectural plans and sections of homes, many since demolished. Her work "aims to recognize the loss of this property both as a historical fact and a trauma of displacement." She uses vintage paper to echo the pages of the archival files and books that provided her with her source material. "Through architecture, the work is concerned with identity, place - and a culture's loss both of individual citizens and of a creative tradition."

Ryan Sarah Murphy creates abstract sculptural wall-mounted collages from found cardboard and book covers. She is interested in using common, everyday materials in ways that reference both construction and deconstruction or decay. The built-up layers of cardboard have an architectural quality and resemble cityscapes or infrastructures, as well as the uneven terrain of a landscape. Murphy's work can be seen as a metaphor for things being torn down and rebuilt, a construction site where the past and present meet.

Cat Poljski's prints are spatial experiments that move between real and imagined architecture, creating a continually changing visual experience. Her abstracted viewpoints question notions of space and time. Poljski is interested in the limitations of the world in which we live and our mind's tendency to create memories that are more appealing than what was actually experienced. Her prints are composed of layered architectural elements that mirror her process of combining etching, aquatint, and relief prints in one work.

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Krista Svalbonas is fascinated by spatial relationships and the effect of architectural form and structure on the psychology of the human environment. Her "Migrants" series began with photographs taken in the three locations where she has lived for the past eight years: the New York metro area, rural Pennsylvania, and Chicago. Taken with various digital cameras, each image is a visual sketch of the genius loci of the landscape and architecture of a place at a particular moment in her history. Svalbonas cuts and reassembles the images in sets of three, creating hybrid structures that reinterpret and reinvent architecture, disrupting space, light, and direction. Her work turns an analytical gaze on the architecture of her past and present while offering a personal reflection on the nature of home.

**Janice Caswell** has had solo exhibitions at Schroeder Romero in New York, the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, CT and Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, Georgia. Her work has appeared in numerous group shows at museums and galleries, including The Weatherspoon Museum, Greensboro, NC; The Austin Museum of Art, Austin, TX; the Bronx Museum of the Arts, NYC; ArtPace, San Antonio, TX; Galerie Anne Barault, Paris; Marlborough Chelsea, NYC; Schema Projects, Brooklyn, NY; and the Housatonic Museum of Art, Bridgeport, CT. Among the publications featuring her work are *Visual Complexity: Mapping Patterns of Information* by Manuel Lima and *The Map as Art: Contemporary Artists Explore Cartography*, by Katharine Harmon. Caswell received a BFA from the School of Visual Arts, NYC and an MA from the University of Notre Dame, IN. She lives and works in New York City.

**Emily Hass** has been awarded grants from the New York Foundation for the Arts (2012), the McCloy Fellowship in Art (2009) and residencies at the Dora Maar House (2015), Gleis70 (2014), the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation (2013, 2010), and the MacDowell Colony (2013) where she was named the 2013-14 Robert and Stephanie Olmsted Fellow. Selections from her series Altonaer Strasse were included in the 2011 Heimatkunde exhibition at the Jewish Museum Berlin and are now part of the museum's permanent collection. In September 2012 Hass was invited to create a site-specific installation in the Sassa Trülzsch gallery. Her work has been reviewed in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, seen in The New York Times and The Berlin Journal, and featured in Der Tagesspiegel, Design Observer and on NPR's Berlin Stories. She received graduate degrees in psychology and design from Harvard University and lives and works in New York.

**Ryan Sarah Murphy's** work has been shown in national and international gallery and museum exhibitions including: Odetta, Brooklyn, NY; Mixed Greens Gallery, New York, NY; Radiator Arts, Long Island City, NY; Platform Gallery, Seattle, WA; Liliana Bloch Gallery, Dallas, TX; Lesley Heller Workspace, New York, NY; Drawing Rooms, Jersey City, NJ; and the Millenaris Cultural Center, Budapest, Hungary. Murphy received a The New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship Grant in 2014 and participated in the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, Studio Program from 2012 – 2014. Her work has been reviewed in numerous publications, including The New York Times and ARTnews. She received her BFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York. She was born in Vermont and currently lives in New York City.

**Cat Poljski** lives and works in Melbourne, Australia. Her work has been the subject of recent solo exhibitions at Neospace, Collingwood; and Dear Patti Smith Gallery and Gearbox Gallery in Melbourne. She has participated in numerous group exhibitions both in Australia and the US, including PointB, Williamsburg, Brooklyn; Sofitel, RMIT School of Art Gallery, and Jackson Press, Fitzroy in Melbourne; Neo Space, Collingwood; Jenny Port Gallery, Richmond; and the *Guanlan International Print Biennial*, Guanlan Museum, Shenzhen, China. In 2013 Poljski

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received the Dame Joan Sutherland Fund Grant from The American Australian Association. She participated twice in the PointB Studio Residency program in Brooklyn, NY, and her work is in numerous public collections in Australia. She received a Diploma of Fine Arts (Printmaking) from Phillip Institute (RMIT), Melbourne, and an MFA Fine Arts from Monash University, Melbourne.

**Krista Svalbonas** has exhibited nationally and internationally. In 2014 she created a site-specific installation at the Ise Cultural Foundation in New York, and was the subject of solo exhibitions at Matteawan Gallery; Miller Yezerski Gallery, Boston, MA; and the New Arts Program, Kutztown, PA. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at The Painting Center, Pocket Utopia, and Trestle Gallery in NYC; Kenise Barnes Fine Art in Larchmont, NY; Watchung Art Center in New Jersey; and Dairy Center of the Arts, Boulder, CO. Svalbonas' work is in the collection of the Cesis Art Museum in Cesis, Latvia as well as numerous private collections. She was recently awarded a fellowship at Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, NE, and is a recipient of a Cooper Union Artist residency. She holds a BFA from Syracuse University and an MFA from SUNY New Paltz. Svalbonas currently lives in Chicago, IL where she is a lecturer in photography at Columbia College.

For additional information please contact Karlyn Benson at [info@matteawan.com](mailto:info@matteawan.com).