



MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM

NEWS RELEASE

3 South Mountain Ave.  
Montclair, NJ 07042  
973-746-5555  
montclairartmuseum.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contacts**

Michael Gillespie, 973-259-5134

[mgillespie@montclairartmuseum.org](mailto:mgillespie@montclairartmuseum.org)

Catherine Mastrangelo, 973-259-5119

[cmastrangelo@montclairartmuseum.org](mailto:cmastrangelo@montclairartmuseum.org)

**MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM PRESENTS  
PARTICIPATORY CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION  
*do it***

**Show is based on conceptual instructions provided by such artists as  
Robert Barry, Louise Bourgeois, Felix Gonzalez-Torres,  
Sol LeWitt, and Yoko Ono**

**Community participation from Girl Scouts, Montclair State University MFA Students,  
Yard School of Art students, Succeed2gether, MAM African American Cultural Committee,  
Hillside Elementary School, and more**

**September 10–December 31, 2016**

MONTCLAIR, NJ, July 5, 2016—Beginning September 10, 2016, Montclair Art Museum (MAM) presents *do it*, an exhibition unlike any other the Museum has hosted. Rather than an exhibition of objects created by artists, *do it* is a collection of conceptual instructions provided by renowned artists. A highly participatory contemporary art exhibition, it has brought together the community and Montclair-area organizations to implement these written instructions.

Curated by Hans-Ulrich Obrist, *do it* began as a conversation between Obrist and the artists Christian Boltanski and Bertrand Lavier. Obrist was concerned with how exhibition formats could be rendered more flexible and open-ended. This discussion led to the question of whether a show could take a similar form to musical “scores,” or written instructions by artists as a point of departure, each of which could be interpreted anew every time they were enacted. To mark the 20th anniversary of this landmark project, Obrist collaborated with Independent Curators International (ICI) to create a new version of the exhibition presenting the largest selection of instructional works to date. It is now the longest-running, most far-reaching show ever to take place.

The driving force behind the exhibition is aptly summarized in the words of the revolutionary modern artist Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), who questioned long-held assumptions about what art should be, and how it should be made, declaring himself “interested in ideas—not merely in visual products.” He is only one of several predecessors to have shaped

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this exhibition, which also draws from Conceptual and Minimalist art of the 1960s and 1970s as well as Fluxus practices, all movements that were highly experimental in nature and sought new ways to think about art.

Each *do it* exhibition is uniquely site-specific because it engages the local community in a dialogue that responds to a new set of instructions. The Montclair Art Museum has selected 27 instructional works from a list of 250, all of which are featured in the book *do it the compendium* (2013). Featured artists include Robert Barry, Louise Bourgeois, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Sol LeWitt, and Yoko Ono.

Members of the MAM community and Montclair area organizations were engaged in the planning and implementation of many of these projects before the opening of the exhibition. For one project, SummerART, teen digital photography students and Girl Scouts completed Hreinn Fridfinnson's "Beauty Marks." Participants engaged in a discussion about the definition of "beauty" in art and personal life, facilitated by Mary Lysinger from COPE Center, Montclair. The discussion was followed by placing beauty marks on the wall and on their own faces in accordance with Hreinn Fridfinnsson's instructions. Other instructions have engaged Montclair State University MFA students, Succeed2gether, Hillside Elementary School, MAM's African American Cultural Committee, Montclair Public Library, and Museum staff.

Several projects will be ongoing and will engage visitors to the museum on a regular basis, especially those of Yuri Aran, Alison Knowles, Yoko Ono, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, and RAQ Media Collective. For example, visitors will be invited to draw on a special doodle wall in the Museum's Learning Lab, as per Aran's instructions. Internationally renowned artist Yoko Ono's *WISH PEACE* (1996) invites visitors to write down their wishes on pieces of paper that they will attach to the branches of a Wish Tree.

Coordinated for the Museum by Leah Fox, Director, Vance Wall Art Education Center and Gail Stavitsky, Chief Curator, this project coincides with the launch of the newly constructed Vance Wall Art Education Center, completed spring 2016.

## ARTISTS

- Uri Aran
- Robert Barry
- Christian Boltanski
- Lousie Bourgeois
- Yun Chu
- Jimmie Durham
- Yona Friedman
- Claire Fontaine
- Hrienn Fridginnsen
- Simryn Gill
- Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster
- Felix Gonzalez-Torres
- Joseph Grigley
- Joan Jonas
- Alison Knowles
- Sol LeWitt
- Lucy Lippard
- Yoko Ono
- Amalia Pica
- Adrian Piper
- Michaelangelo Pistoletto
- RAQ Media Collective
- David Reed
- Hassan Sharif
- Jim Shaw
- Shimabuku
- Hannah Weinberger

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## **RELATED EVENTS**

### **MAM Lawn Party**

Saturday, September 10, 12–5 p.m.

Free with suggested admission

Celebrate the exhibitions *do it* and *Janet Taylor Pickett: The Matisse Series* with a daylong celebration featuring a special Parents Who Rock Benefit Concert for MAM. Join us from noon to 5 p.m. outside on the lawn for performances by over 20 local bands and performers, family-friendly activities, and food vendors serving a variety of delicious fare. MAM members are invited to an exhibition preview before the community event. All proceeds support MAM Art Truck artist residency programs at Side Door Montclair after-school locations.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Tune in to MAM's social media every Monday for a *do it* instruction and post your own implementations with #MAMdoit. Find the Museum on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat @MAMmontclair.

## **EXHIBITION WEBSITE**

The Museum will maintain a site dedicated to the exhibition for journalists seeking further information, including a checklist, images, and related events and programs. Please visit [montclairartmuseum.org/press](http://montclairartmuseum.org/press).

## **EXHIBITION SUPPORT**

*do it* is a traveling exhibition conceived and curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, and organized by Independent Curators International (ICI), New York. The exhibition and the accompanying publication were made possible, in part, by grants from the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation, the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, and with the generous support from Project Perpetual and ICI's International Forum and Board of Trustees.

The presentation of *do it* at MAM is supported, in part, by Ann and Mel Schaffer and Margo and Frank Walter.

## **About the Museum**

The Montclair Art Museum, a notable, community-based institution with an international reputation, boasts a renowned collection of American and Native American art that uniquely highlights art making in the United States over the last three hundred years. The collection includes more than 12,000 objects: paintings, prints, original works on paper, photographs, and sculpture by American artists from the 18th century to the present, as well as traditional and contemporary Native American art and artifacts representing the cultural developments of peoples from all of the major American Indian regions.

The Vance Wall Art Education Center, launched in 2016, encompasses all the Museum's educational efforts, from the established Yard School of Art to newly minted MAM Art Truck. MAM programs serve a wide public of all ages and bring artists, performers, and scholars to the Museum on a regular basis. The Yard School of Art offers a multitude of comprehensive courses for children, teens, adults, seniors, and professional artists and has been recognized in the Discover Jersey Arts People's Choice Awards as the Favorite Adult Art Class and Favorite Art Camp two years in a row.

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The Montclair Art Museum is located at 3 South Mountain Avenue in Montclair, N.J. Information and directions are available on the Museum website, [montclairartmuseum.org](http://montclairartmuseum.org), or by calling 973-746-5555. MAM is open Wednesdays through Sundays, Noon – 5 p.m., and on the first Thursday night of the month (October–June), from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. It is closed on Mondays, Tuesdays, and major holidays. Museum admission is \$12 for nonmember adults, \$10 for senior citizens and students with I.D., and free for members and children under 12. Free First Thursday Nights and Free First Fridays are free for everyone. The Store at MAM is open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and has extended hours until 9 p.m. on Free First Thursday Nights.

*All Museum programs are made possible, in part, by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, Carol and Terry Wall / The Vance Wall Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and Museum members.*

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