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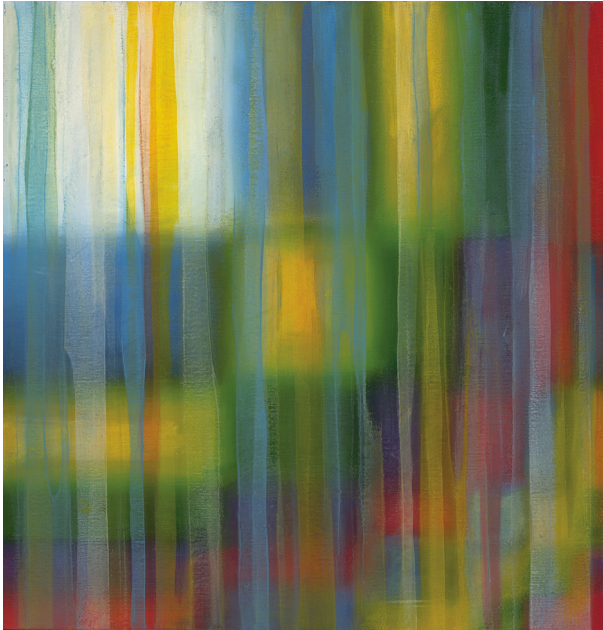


Image 1

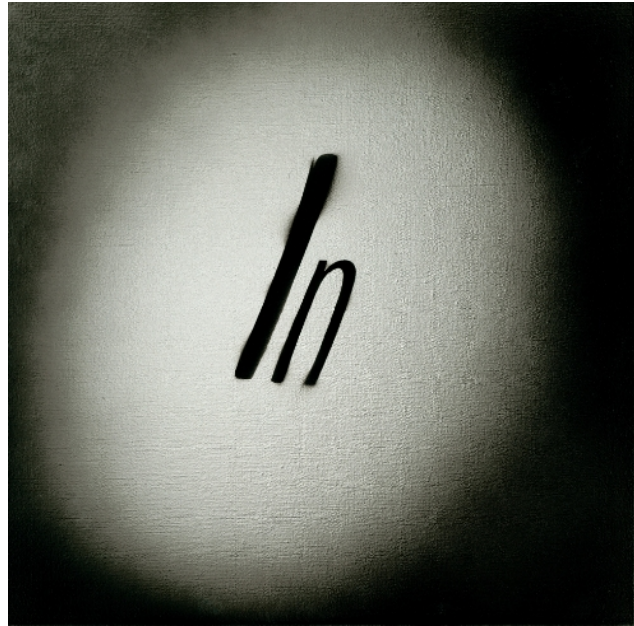


Image 2

Circle of Truth: A Visual Game of Telephone that Explores the Subject of Truth in the Human Experience

Exhibition features forty-nine paintings by LA-based artists including Ed Ruscha, created in secret over a period of nine years.

LOS GATOS, CA – August 2018 – New Museum Los Gatos (NUMU) is pleased to present the first public showing of the traveling exhibition, *The Circle of Truth*, a wholly unique collaboration of 49 contemporary artists, each sequestered and unknown to one another, working in absolute secrecy. Taking a full nine years from launch to completion, *The Circle of Truth Project* is a modern, visual take on a common childhood classroom exercise wherein a secret message was whispered from student to student, often referred to as the Rumor Circle, or the Telephone Game.

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The Circle of Truth Project was launched in 2009 and completed in 2016. The exhibition makes its debut at NUMU on October 19, 2018 and runs through March 10, 2019. It will travel to the Lancaster Museum of Art and History (MOAH) in Lancaster, CA in August 2019 and the Orange County Center for Contemporary Art (OCCCA) in Santa Ana, CA in October 2019.

The LA-based Project was conceived by artist, Laura Hipke and co-curated with artist, Shane Guffogg. Exhibiting artists from Los Angeles, Arizona and New York include: Kim Abeles, Lisa Adams, Lita Albuquerque, Charles Arnoldi, Lisa Bartleson, Billy Al Bengston, Justin Bower, Virginia Broersma, Randall Cabe, Rhea Carmi, Greg Colson, Jeff Colson, Stanley Dorfman, Cheryl Ekstrom, Jimi Gleason, Rives Granade, Ron Griffin, Alex Gross, Shane Guffogg, Lynn Hanson, Doro Hofmann, Tim Isham, Kim Kimbro, Bari Kumar, Cal Lane, Margaret Lazzari, Mark Licari, Dan Lutzick, Deborah Martin, Susan McDonnell, Christopher Monger, Jim Morphesis, Andy Moses, Juan Carlos Munoz Hernandez, Gary Panter, Daniel Peacock, Bruce Richards, Michael Andrew Rosenfeld, Ed Ruscha, Eddie Ruscha, Paul Ruscha, John Scane, Vonn Sumner, Matthew Thomas, Alison Van Pelt, Michelle Weinstein, Ruth Weisberg, Robert Williams and Todd Williamson.

The forty-nine works of art by forty-nine artists were created specifically for the project. Mostly oil paintings, the works are all the same size and are displayed in the order in which they were created by the collaborating artists.

Viewers of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities and levels of education will be able to quickly understand the meaning of the exhibition. There are no prerequisites or any fundamental knowledge needed to appreciate and recognize truth. The experience relies simply on the viewers' inherent human nature. The exhibition provides many levels of interest from superficial amusement to existential explorations.

“The project is a microcosm of contemporary art, encompassing many artistic styles. It pushes beyond the post-modernist era where all styles are relevant – from hyper-realism, to pop, to pure abstraction with the myriad overlapping styles which reside between,” explains

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project curator, Shane Guffogg. “Using paint and words, the artists speak to the viewers candidly, providing a rare perspective into their experience and thought processes.”

The Project Rules

The first painting (“visiting painting”) created by Shane Guffogg, was delivered along with a blank canvas to the second artist in the Circle. The second artist was not given the identity of the first artist, nor what the painting was about or represented. The only instruction was to find “truth” in the first painting and then use the blank canvas to create a work of art in response (the “response painting”). When finished, the painting and a new blank canvas were delivered to the third artist, and the first painting was placed in storage. This procedure was repeated by the participating artists who were asked to keep the secret until the project was complete. The final/forty-ninth painting was created by Ed Ruscha. The artists did not sign their paintings or talk about the project to anyone. Each artist was asked to write an essay about their experience. Excerpts of the essays are included in the exhibition. The accompanying exhibition catalogue with its sequential layout and essays by the artists, provides a lasting record of the experience.

What transpired over the course of the project – what truths were explored and discovered, how the artists were affected – broadened the scope of the project from an interesting exploration of sensitivity and creativity into an unexpected examination of what truth means sociologically and spiritually.

“*Circle of Truth* opens a dialogue regarding the nature of what we consider truth to be, and even whether we think it exists. Of course, as intelligent beings we understand the potential of rumors and the inherent flaws of receiving and re-transmitting information. But few give more than a shake of the head in response,” says project curator, Laura Hipke. “The exhibition allows the viewer to witness each and every change in the seed of truth.”

What is truth? How do people feel about their access to truth? What is our responsibility to preserve truth? Is truth still important or even relevant? How does the subtle erosion of our

confidence in truth affect our sense of well-being? The exhibition touches on a need that resonates deeply in the human psyche – access to meaningful, truthful contact with others. This truthful contact is the secret ingredient in the *Circle of Truth* Project.

About the Curators

Laura Hipke and Shane Guffogg are artists living in the Greater Los Angeles Area. They are former members of Pharmaka (co-founded by Guffogg), a defunct painter's group museum/gallery in downtown Los Angeles.

Shane Guffogg was born in Los Angeles, California. He received his B.F.A. from Cal Arts, and during his studies he interned in New York City. He relocated to Los Angeles, where he lived in Venice Beach and worked as a Studio Assistant for Ed Ruscha from 1989 until 1995. Guffogg's work is in the collections of the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, Fundación/Colección Jumex, Mexico City, The Imperial Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Russia, The Gallery of the Museum Center, Baku, Azerbaijan, Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, Long Beach Museum of Art, Long Beach, St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation, Los Angeles and other public collections. Guffogg is also a celebrated curator, lecturer and television host. More information: shaneguffogg.com

Laura Hipke is a Los Angeles based artist and curator. Thematically, Laura explores the interiors of the heart and what it means to be human. Her work includes painting and printmaking, as well as ongoing projects that require the input of strangers. Laura has been described as an intuitive. She is self-taught, except for briefly attending California Institute of the Arts when she was sixteen. More information: laurahipke.com

Image 1: Shane Guffogg, oil on canvas, Courtesy of the Artist

Image 2: Ed Ruscha, oil on canvas, Courtesy of the Artist

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About New Museum Los Gatos

New Museum Los Gatos (NUMU), formerly The Museums of Los Gatos founded in 1965, is a public non-profit art and history museum located in the Civic Center Plaza in downtown Los Gatos. NUMU's mission is to engage the community at the intersection of art, history and education through innovative, locally connected and globally relevant exhibitions, programs and experiences. Visit: numulosgatos.org

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