

Contact:
Marni McEntee
Director of Communications
Cell: 608.515.0137
marni@mmoca.org

MEDIA RELEASE: February 5, 2021

MADISON MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART TO DEBUT NEW PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS BY AMY CUTLER

*Amy Cutler:
A Narrative Thread*
explores the
varied sources
of inspiration informing
the artist's work

On View February 20
through May 16, 2021

>
Amy Cutler,
Buoyant, 2020.

Gouache on paper,
22-7/8 x 21-1/2 inches.
Collection of Heidi and
John Cooper.
© Amy Cutler,
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow
Artworks + Projects, New York.
Photography: Adam Reich.

@cutler_amy



High-resolution
images are available
upon request.

mmoca.org
@mmocamadison

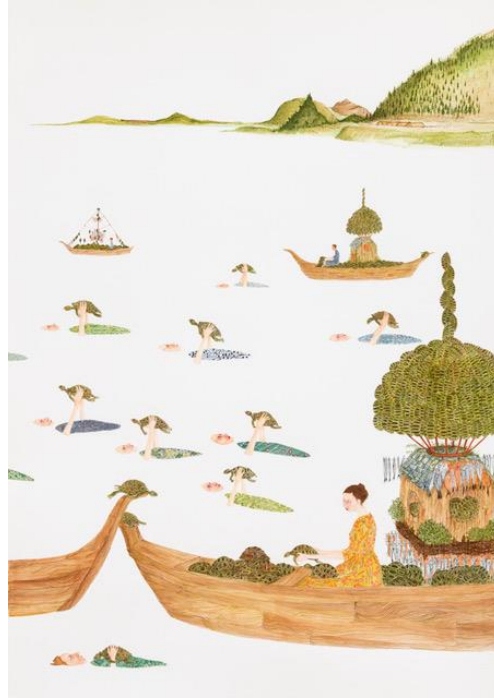
MADISON, WI— The Madison Museum of Contemporary Art (MMoCA) will present *Amy Cutler: A Narrative Thread*, a solo exhibition that includes a selection of existing work from 2003 to 2018, in addition to eight new pieces that will be on view to the public for the first time. Based in Brooklyn, NY, Cutler (b. 1974) has garnered critical acclaim for her immaculately detailed and narratively enigmatic works of art. Her contemplative and psychologically charged compositions act as abstracted metaphors that reflect the artist's personal experiences and anxieties. This exhibition explores the ways Cutler approaches her sources of visual inspiration and meaningfully reimagines them, in her paintings and drawings, as elements that gesture to a loose storyline.

Contact:
Marni McEntee
Director of Communications
Cell: 608.515.0137
marni@mmoca.org

MEDIA RELEASE: February 5, 2021

>
Amy Cutler,
Assessment, 2020.

Gouache on paper,
41-1/2 x 29 inches.
© Amy Cutler,
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow
Artworks + Projects, New York.
Photography: Adam Reich.



Cutler has spoken often of her decades-long interest in historical clothing and textiles, miniature paintings in Persian and Indian manuscripts, and *ukiyo-e* (i.e., “floating world pictures”) woodblock

prints from Japan. Her use of such cultural references point to a conscientious and deliberate process, which melds extensive observation and contemplation with her distinctive creative ingenuity. Honoring her process, MMoCA Curator of Exhibitions Leah Kolb invited Cutler to Madison to view works from several local collections that align with her artistic interests: the Jane Werner Watson Collection of Indian Miniatures and E. B. Van Vleck Collection of Japanese Prints at the

Chazen Museum of Art, and the Helen Louise Allen Textile Collection at the School of Human Ecology (SoHE), University of Wisconsin-Madison.

>
Amy Cutler,
Cumulus, 2020.

Graphite on paper,
22 x 30 inches.
© Amy Cutler,
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow
Artworks + Projects, New York.
Photography: Adam Reich.



Cutler spent hours in the Chazen’s Print Study room, examining several dozen works-on-paper the museum’s staff had pulled for viewing. She similarly delighted in the historical textiles, apparel, and fabric samples at SoHE, studying drawer after drawer of materials

stored in the collections vault. *A Narrative Thread* will highlight a new body of work Cutler developed in response to her visit to these Madison-based collections.

Contact:
Marni McEntee
Director of Communications
Cell: 608.515.0137
marni@mmoca.org

MEDIA RELEASE: February 5, 2021

“It is very rare to find a curator so in tune with your practice,” Cutler said of Kolb. “Leah understood my processes and was curious if my next body of works might be informed by these two collections. I loved the idea and flew out to Madison to spend time with a number of artworks and textiles that I was able to see in-person, based on specific pieces I had identified using the institutions’ online collection resources. This was an amazing opportunity to be surrounded by Japanese woodblock prints, Persian miniatures, and textiles that I often only admire from behind glass or in books.

>
Amy Cutler,
Transference, 2020.

Gouache on paper,
21-3/8 x 21-1/2 inches.
© Amy Cutler,
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow
Artworks + Projects, New York.
Photography: Adam Reich.



“I returned from my trip very inspired. I had never worked so intentionally from a selected group of works. It was interesting to discover connections within my selection. What surfaced [in the subsequent works] was the state of being in limbo, submergence and transference. The interaction between the figures reflected a slowing down in a nonexistent place of the in-between.”

Contact:
Marni McEntee
Director of Communications
Cell: 608.515.0137
marni@mmoca.org

MEDIA RELEASE: February 5, 2021

Adapting a compositional strategy, reimagining a landscape element, or elaborating on intricate patterning from a textile, Cutler created several works inspired by her visits to Madison.

Buoyant (2020) provides insight into Cutler's process—revealing not only her compositional inspiration but also how it informed the painting's narrative thread. Within the work one woman grips an oar in her left hand and, with her right hand, clenches one end of a long, thin swath of fabric, which is pulled taut and connected to something (or someone) outside our field of view. This seemingly small compositional detail originated from a woodblock print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi from the Chazen's Van Vleck Collection. The gesture of "reaching beyond" became a crucial conceptual starting point for *Buoyant*, a painting that transforms personal emotions into a complex visual metaphor about a very relatable human condition: the struggle to stay afloat while discovering our own route to solid ground.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

>
Amy Cutler,
Reclamation, 2020.

Gouache on paper,
41 x 54-3/4 inches.
© Amy Cutler,
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow
Artworks + Projects, New York.
Photography: Adam Reich.



An exhibition catalogue will accompany *A Narrative Thread*. As an homage to Cutler's creative process, MMoCA commissioned five female authors—Chloe Benjamin, Lydia Conklin, Krista Eastman, Lauren

Groff, and Suzanne Rivecca—to write short stories about several of the paintings included in the exhibition. Just as Cutler studies and incorporates a variety of source images into her creative process, these talented writers looked to her paintings as a jumping off point to create their own unique artistic narratives.

Contact:
Marni McEntee
Director of Communications
Cell: 608.515.0137
marni@mmoca.org



MEDIA RELEASE: February 5, 2021

ABOUT MMoCA

Contact:
Marni McEntee
Director of Communications
Cell: 608.515.0137
marni@mmoca.org

High-resolution images
available on request

The Madison Museum of Contemporary Art is always admission-free. Its vision is to be an organization that fosters the exchange of ideas and creates experiences that will inspire a wide audience; be a nexus for the work of emerging and established regional, national, and international artists; serve as a catalyst for the continued development of a vigorous community of artists; and provide a forum that will encourage people to be challenged by, reflect on, and make connections between art and the world around them.

The Museum includes four galleries and The Shop, a recently opened space to provide interactive contemporary art experiences and educational workshops to the community. The Museum's Rooftop Sculpture Garden provides an urban oasis with an incredible view which serves as a lovely venue for weddings, art openings, dining, and cinema.

In order to support our community and help prevent further spread of COVID-19, MMoCA's galleries are temporarily closed, but the Museum has a slate of online events, including wellness activities, education workshops, and virtual tours. Please visit mmoca.org to learn more.

###