

LAGUNA GLORIA

START

HOME

ABOUT

ARTISTS

EVENTS



Wangechi Mutu

JONES CENTER ON CONGRESS + LAGUNA GLORIA
SEPTEMBER 23, 2017 – JANUARY 14, 2018



John Bock

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MISSION



Mission: The Contemporary Austin reflects the spectrum of contemporary art through exhibitions, commissions, education, and the collection.



Vision: The Contemporary Austin aspires to be the contemporary art museum for Austin and an essential part of city life. Through its unique combination of urban and outdoor sites, The Contemporary will embody an eclectic and collaborative spirit.

HISTORY

1911

Texas Fine Arts Association (TFAA) is formed.

1943

Clara Driscoll donates her lakeside estate in west Austin to be used as a Museum

1961

TFAA splits into two separate entities. Laguna Gloria Art Museum is created with the purpose of owning and operating the museum and grounds, and presenting exhibitions and educational programs in the Driscoll Villa.

1983

The Art School's 4,100-square foot facility is constructed on the grounds of Laguna Gloria.

1996

Laguna Gloria Art Museum changes its name to Austin Museum of Art (AMOA) and moves its primary exhibition space to 823 Congress Avenue.

2003

The Driscoll Villa and gardens and key features of The Art School complex are refurbished and restored through a successful \$3.6 million Laguna Gloria Renewal Project.

2008

The historic Gatehouse is restored and the Art School studios expanded by 2,500-square feet of new ceramics and painting space.

2011

Arthouse at the Jones Center and the Austin Museum of Art (AMOA) celebrate 100 and 50 years. The two institutions formalize a merger under the temporary name AMOA-Arthouse, rejoining the two primary organizations that constituted the Texas Fine Arts Association.

2013

AMOA-Arthouse debuts its new name and brand: The Contemporary Austin.



PERMANENT ARTISTS

JOHN GRADE

Seeking to enrich and expand viewers' (and his own) relationship to place, Grade subtly inserts his sculptures into the landscape, combining natural materials such as wood, stone, animal hides, and clay with engineered or man-made materials. Many of his installations, including Canopy Tower, a new commission for the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park at Laguna Gloria, are sited specifically in consideration of environmental factors.

LIAM GILLICK

A sparse aesthetic vocabulary belies conceptual complexity in which distilled elements of utopian modernism, power ideology, social interaction, and corporate production make up a constellation of open-ended proposals. His work references function, then departs from it; mines architecture, but prioritizes aesthetic; suggests known structures, only to abstract them; proposes narratives, then fragments, rearranges, and corrupts them. Alluding to iconic mid-century modernist architectural forebears.

For his two-part exhibition at The Contemporary Austin, Gillick has taken on the rich and complex identity of Laguna Gloria, a site with a historic Italianate villa and twelve acres of lush, semi-wild landscape bordered on three sides by water.

ORLY GENDER

Blending large-scale sculpture techniques with an expanded notion of craft and textile, New York City-based artist and designer Orly Genger creates organic forms and site-specific installations from painted swaths of woven rope. With the help of assistants, Genger looms, crochets, weaves, and knots heavy twine over the course of many months to create a single work. In recent projects, she has used recycled lobster rope purchased by the artist from fishermen in local communities, a gesture that has both positive economical and social purposes, bringing briny or sea-frozen coils of twine into her studio, cleaning it first, then knotting and painting it.

PAUL MCCARTHY

McCarthy was part of an essential group of divergent artists teaching and working in the city, some of whom, like McCarthy himself, made messy, scatological, and performance-based works that challenged the status quo. His installation, White Snow, is located at Laguna Gloria.

MARIANNE VITALE

Utilizing the abandoned evidence of quotidian human existence as raw material, Marianne Vitale (American, born 1973) transforms decaying elements of rural life into rugged visual poems alluding to a larger universal and celestial cosmology. Vitale's deliberately crude structures made of found materials such as reclaimed barn lumber, unused railroad tracks, and beams from abandoned factories are created through the artist's simple but transformative processes and actions.

In Laguna Gloria's lower meadow, the artist has installed a series of nine altered railroad "common crossings" or "frogs," thousand-pound solid-steel components that are the switches or guides responsible for changing the direction of trains. Welded to bases and standing upright, they evoke a clan of totemic beings, ancient and alien, emerging from the woods and clustering in the grass.

