



PRESS RELEASE

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BAMPFA Mounts Exhibition of New Work by Contemporary Artist Jay Heikes

On View February 14–April 29, 2018

***Jay Heikes / MATRIX 269* Marks First West Coast Museum Presentation of Heikes's Work**



(Berkeley, CA) February 7, 2018—The UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive ([BAMPFA](#)) launches the fortieth anniversary of its [MATRIX Program](#)—which introduces Bay Area audiences to exceptional voices in contemporary art—with an exhibition of work by Jay Heikes, the Minneapolis-based artist whose practice explores the interplay between borders, music, and material discovery. [Jay Heikes / MATRIX 269](#) is the first museum presentation of a new series of works Heikes created during a 2017 residency in Marfa, Texas, which draws inspiration from the West Texas desert and the invisible presence of the nearby Mexican border.

The son of a chemist, Heikes likens his practice to a form of alchemy, and his work often evokes a sense of curiosity about the transformation of material objects. Heikes began his career as a guitar player, and music remains integral to his practice, which also encompasses drawing, painting, sculpture, video, and other forms. Two drawings from Heikes's *Music for Minor Planets* series, which references the visual aesthetics of musical notation and galactic constellations, are included in his MATRIX presentation. A nearby sculpture installation, also titled *Minor Planets*, extends the visual metaphor of heavenly bodies with earthbound spherical objects made from such alchemically significant materials as bismuth, Gladstone ore, and lignum vitae.

Jay Heikes / MATRIX 269 also includes a selection from the Z series—a collection of paintings that reference the last letter of the alphabet through such eclectic materials as salt, ink, fiberglass, acorn husks, and rubber snakes. The series alludes to Heikes’s interest in the end of language and its relationship to the passage of time, a recurring theme in the artist’s practice. A different kind of visual metaphor is suggested by two large-scale copper fences featured in the exhibition. Inspired by Heikes’s Marfa residency, the fences conjure the metaphorical weight of artificial borders cutting across a vast desert landscape.



“In addition to activating a reflection on our cultural moment, the works in **MATRIX 269** highlight Heikes’s commitment to the material properties of the art object and his probing of potential form,” said Apsara DiQuinzio, BAMPFA’s curator of modern and contemporary art and Phyllis C. Wattis MATRIX Curator, who organized **Jay Heikes / MATRIX 269**. “Together, the works embody the artist’s longing for transcendence amid the deluge of negative media in the wake of the 2016 presidential election, and the attendant demonizing rhetoric of the Other.”

As the first MATRIX artist of 2018, Heikes joins a distinguished roster of contemporary artists who have presented work through the program over the past forty years, including Jean-Michel Basquiat, Louise Bourgeois, James Lee Byars, Sophie Calle, Jay DeFeo, Willem de Kooning, Juan Downey, Eva Hesse, Sol LeWitt, Shirin Neshat, Nancy Spero, Cecilia Vicuña, Andy Warhol, and many others. His exhibition is the first of multiple MATRIX exhibitions at BAMPFA throughout the program’s fortieth anniversary year; for details about other upcoming MATRIX shows and related programs, visit bampfa.org.

In conjunction with the opening of **Jay Heikes / MATRIX 269**, Heikes presents an [artist’s talk](#) at BAMPFA on Wednesday, February 14 at 6 p.m.

Support

Jay Heikes / MATRIX 269 is organized by Apsara DiQuinzio, curator of modern and contemporary art and Phyllis C. Wattis MATRIX Curator, with Matthew Coleman, curatorial assistant. The MATRIX Program is made possible by a generous endowment gift from Phyllis C. Wattis and the continued support of the BAMPFA Trustees.

Above

1) Jay Heikes: *Zs*, 2017; wood, glue, salt, ink; 69 1/2 x 40 x 3 in.; courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen.

2) Jay Heikes: *Zs*, 2017; steel slag, salt, glue, pigment, ink, fiberglass, rubber snakes, copper wire, acorn husks, rocks, dirt; 51 x 38 x 4 in.; courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen.

3) Jay Heikes: *Couper l’oeil*, 2017; copper, wax, aluminum foil, steel, steel slag, cast bronze, iron; 216 x 216 x 96 in.; courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen.

Visitor Information

Address

2155 Center Street, Berkeley, CA 94720

Hours

Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

\$13 general admission

\$11 non-UC Berkeley students, disabled, 65+

FREE BAMPFA members; UC Berkeley students, faculty, staff; 18 & under; one adult per child 13 & under

Information

bampfa.org

(510) 642-0808

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Jay Heikes – Biography

Born in 1975 in Princeton, New Jersey, Jay Heikes received his BFA from the University of Michigan in 1998 and his MFA from Yale University in 2005. Working across mediums, the artist fuses his fondness for humor, irony, and puns with an experimental studio practice. Heikes has had one-person gallery exhibitions at Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York; Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago; and Federica Schiavo Gallery, Milan; as well as solo exhibitions at the Aspen Art Museum, Colorado; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; P.S.1. Contemporary Art Center (now MoMA PS1), New York; and Artists Space, New York. His work has been featured in numerous group shows, including exhibitions at Fondazione Giuliani, Rome; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Barbican Art Gallery, London; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and Renaissance Society, Chicago. The artist was included in the 2006 Whitney Biennial, and in 2017 had a residency at The Chinati Foundation, Marfa, Texas. Heikes lives and works in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

About BAMPFA

An internationally recognized arts institution with deep roots in the Bay Area, the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) is a forum for cultural experiences that transform individuals and advance the local, national, and global discourse on art and film. BAMPFA is UC Berkeley's premier visual arts venue, presenting more than 450 film screenings, scores of public programs, and up to twenty exhibitions annually. With its vibrant and eclectic programming, BAMPFA inspires the imagination and ignites critical dialogue through art, film, and other forms of creative expression.

The institution's collection of more than 19,000 works of art dates from 3000 BCE to the present day and includes important holdings of Neolithic Chinese ceramics, Ming and Qing Dynasty Chinese painting, Old Master works on paper, Italian Baroque painting, early American painting, Abstract Expressionist painting, contemporary photography, and Conceptual art. BAMPFA's collection also includes more than 17,500 films and videos, including the largest collection of Japanese cinema outside of Japan, impressive holdings of Soviet cinema, West Coast avant-garde film, and seminal video art, as well as hundreds of thousands of articles, reviews, posters, and other ephemera related to the history of film.