

NEWS RELEASE

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From Monumental to Microscopic

Spectrums of Size and Scale Explored in Three New Shows at the San Jose ICA



SAN JOSE, CA – January 2011 – Drawing inspiration from the classic documentary short film, *Powers of Ten*, the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) is presenting new exhibitions that address ideas of size and scale.

Urgency a large-scale site-specific installation by Portland-based sculptor Mike Rathbun will be on view in the ICA's Focus Gallery from February 26th through June 4th. *Size Matters*, a group show in the Main Gallery from March 12th through June 18th will feature an eclectic mix of works by ten artists from Canada and the United States.

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Powers of Ten will play concurrently in the ICA's Cardinale Project Room from February 26th through June 11th. An opening reception celebrating the works and artists in all three shows will be held at the ICA on Friday, March 11th from 6 – 8 PM.

Powers of Ten (February 26 – June 11, 2011)

This 1968 documentary short film (re-released in 1977) written and directed by famed American designers Ray and Charles Eames, depicts the relative scale of the universe in factors of ten. Starting at a picnic scene in a city park, the film transports the viewer to the outer edges of the universe. Every ten seconds the starting point is viewed from ten times farther out until the galaxy is visible only as a speck of light. Returning to earth, the scene rewinds quickly to zero in on the hand of a sleeping picnicker. The journey ends with a magnified view of a molecule.



Powers of Ten, offers a ticket to adventures in magnitude and has influenced scores of artists, designers, science and technology enthusiasts and anyone who ponders the mysteries of life and the universe. "Taking our cue from this seminal work, we are exploring the notion of scale with an eclectic mix of emerging and established contemporary artists who consider ideas, problems and challenges through creative lenses as big as canyons and as small as worm holes," says ICA Executive Director, Cathy Kimball.

Urgency (February 26 – June 4, 2011)

Mike Rathbun works monumentally, creating massive sculptural works that address the kinds of big ideas that he tackles through his art. His large-scale wooden installations fuse the physical with the spiritual and resemble soaring theatrical stage sets depicting ships tossed at sea, plane crashes in remote landscapes and massively-scaled machine parts. In *Urgency*, Rathbun continues to explore big ideas as he transforms the ICA's installation space into an immersive landscape of spike-riddled medieval spires.



Portland-based sculptor Mike Rathbun a Midwest sculptor currently living in Portland, Oregon, is an Assistant Professor of Sculpture at Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon. He received his M.F.A. in 1995 from University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota and his B.A. from Bethel College, St. Paul, Minnesota in 1991. His installations and exhibitions have appeared throughout the U.S., including Art Gym, Marylhurst University, Portland, Oregon; Franconia Sculpture Park, Shafer Minnesota; Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, California; Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, New York; and Huntington Beach Art Center, Huntington Beach, California. Rathbun has also been awarded prestigious national and regional grants from the Jerome Foundation, Minnesota State Arts Board, The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts and the Bush Foundation, among others.

***Size Matters* (March 12 – June 18, 2011)**

Size Matters presents the work of ten artists from Canada and the United States who address ideas of size and scale through physical and conceptual explorations. The exhibition will include works in a range of mediums from artists Terry Berlier, Kevin B. Chen, Dalton Ghetti, Dana Harel, Ian Harvey and Koo Kyung Sook, Elaine Ling, Eamon MacMahon, Klari Reis, Christina Seely, and Gail Wight. Visitors to this exhibition will be invited to view the world, their communities and their own lives from new and unexpected perspectives like those seen through the magnified lens of Dana Harel's life-sized drawings of fused animal and human creatures, to those viewed through the impossibly miniature aperture of Dalton Ghetti who creates detailed sculptures carved from the lead atop pencils. In addition to wall-sized drawings and miniscule sculptures, *Size Matters* will present photographs, paintings, video and mixed media works created across a wide spectrum of scale and size.



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Images:

Christina Seeley, *Metropolis 40 25'N 3 41' W* (from the *Lux* series) 2008, digital print, 30 x 40 inches, Courtesy of the Artist

Ray and Charles Eames, *Powers of Ten*, 1968, video still, Courtesy of Eames Office

Mike Rathbun, *I'm bad, I'm good, I'm bad...*, 2010, Wood, Courtesy of the Artist

Dana Harel, *Elephas maximus*, 2008, graphite on paper, 96 x 72 inches, Courtesy of the Artist and Frey Norris Gallery, San Francisco

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Urgency is generously supported in part by an Applied Materials Excellence in the Arts Grant, a program of Arts Council Silicon Valley. The San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art gratefully acknowledges support from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the James Irvine Foundation, Adobe Systems Incorporated, the SanDisk Corporate fund of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and members of the ICA. The ICA is supported in part by a Cultural Affairs grant from the City of San Jose and by a grant from Arts Council Silicon Valley, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and the California Arts Council.

The San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) is an energetic art space located in downtown San Jose dedicated to making contemporary art accessible and exciting to audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Exhibitions are presented in three galleries that display the most current, relevant and often challenging art from the region, the nation and the world. The ICA is activated by opening receptions, monthly gallery walks, after-dark programming in the front windows, panel discussions, printmaking workshops, brown bag lunches and impromptu conversations in the galleries. Admission is always free.

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