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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Christine Corday presents monumental site-specific sculptures and paintings commissioned by CAM for her major exhibition *RELATIVE POINTS*



Christine Corday, artist rendering of *RELATIVE POINTS* commission for CAM, 2018. Compressed elemental metal, metalloids, sodium silicate, 53 x 49 x 53 inches. Courtesy the artist.

November 20, 2018 (St. Louis, MO) - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis presents a major exhibition of site-specific work by Christine Corday. *RELATIVE POINTS*, a twelve-piece installation commissioned by the Museum, consists of monumental, cold-cast sculptures. Eleven of the works will be placed in the gallery in a “non-random constellation” designed by the artist. One sculpture will sit outside in CAM’s courtyard. In addition to *RELATIVE POINTS*, the exhibition will include a new, hybrid painting series, *Primer Grey, Centers for Gravity*. *Christine Corday: RELATIVE POINTS* will be on view at CAM from January 18 through April 21, 2019.

In Corday’s unique body of work, she combines the sciences with the fine arts to investigate the material matter that defines space and the universe, and indeed makes up all living things. Among the many compelling qualities of *RELATIVE POINTS* is the artist’s intention for the work to be handled and touched by visitors—underscoring the importance of the body in relation to these elemental forms. The works are fashioned through a cold-cast process, compressing 10,000 pounds of elemental metal and metalloid grit. Some of the objects’ surfaces will change and even slough off as a consequence of subtle friction produced by visitor interaction. Corday sets herself apart from notions of pristine, immutable fine art, insisting upon the visitor’s physical interaction as an integral part of the completion of the work. Yet concern for purity of abstract form is another principal element that determines the integrity of her sculpture and paintings. In this way, her work belongs within the legacy of minimalism, to which *RELATIVE POINTS* will contribute a dialogue with Richard Serra’s *Joe*, a major torqued ellipse in the Pulitzer Arts Foundation courtyard adjacent to CAM.

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A 21st-century alchemist, Corday engages in the transformation of matter. For some of her works she makes use of chemical recipes that date back to Sir Isaac Newton's 17th-century experimentation. Iron is an element within all the works she constructs, and Corday suggests a metaphorical understanding of its significance. The human body contains four grams of iron, enough to manufacture a regular hardware store nail. Encounters with these elemental alloys, she suggests, "toggles the iron within, and how we contribute to our own nail." Iron is also at the core of stars, which may account for the otherworldliness of her sculptures, like meteorites from outer space, putting visitors in dialogue with their own "inner space."



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The *RELATIVE POINTS* sculptures are cylinders, each with a conic point at one end. "Point," as noun and verb, is central to conception of the work—"point" calls attention to person or place, with each piece pointing in a different direction. Corday describes the meaning behind this configuration in a koan: "If we find comfort with the notion of a center, then we must find comfort in a center found in every direction." In infinite space, every point marks the center, with "center" acknowledged as a relative concept.

Corday's latest painting series, *Primer Grey, Centers for Gravity*, are also developed through chemical processes. For *Primer Grey*, Corday primes the metal rectangular surface, then collects the primer covering the plane into a mass in the lower corner of the rectangle, referencing the gravitational pull toward the Earth's core. Primer grey is both a medium and a color, and the grey pigment itself is a concentration of metals. The metal support for all of the *Primer Grey* series is constructed of elemental metals fashioned by the artist, allowing further insight into Corday's continuous play with materiality and how materials shift and transform through multiple interactions.

Christine Corday (b. 1970, Laurel, Maryland, lives and works in New York City) works with temperature, material states, elemental metals, and often creates additional media in artist-led collaborations with international scientists and science organizations. She is the sole artist among thousands of scientists from thirty-five nations involved in the ambitious energy project ITER, which seeks to prove the feasibility of fusion as a large-scale, carbon-free energy source—the same energy that powers the Sun and stars. Among her many public works, a major commission for San Francisco's Moscone Center, *Geneses*, a massive sculpture of stainless steel, aluminum, and concrete, is scheduled for installation in winter 2018–19. In solo exhibitions, *Protoist Series: Selected Forms*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2015) and *UNE*, High Line (New York City, 2008) suspended works provoke an awareness of sensory stimuli. Following an astrophysics internship at NASA/SETI (Moffett Field, CA, 1991), Corday created *Foundation Civilization* (Seville, 2000) for projects exploring such intersections of art and science as *Instrument for the Ocean to Play* (2001). In Spain, Corday formulated a black pigment color later selected by architect Michael Arad as the touch-focused color for the National September 11 Memorial (New York City, 2001), which Corday applied by hand through a heated application. Corday founded her work studios in Tokyo (1999–2000); Seville (2000–04); Greenpoint, Brooklyn (2005–08); and Hudson Valley, New York (2008–Current). Corday was nominated for the United States Artist Fellow in 2016.

The exhibition is generously supported by Penny Pennington and Michael Fidler, and Alexandra and Peter Strelow. The Artist Talk is generously supported by the Robert Lehman Foundation. Special thanks to Christopher Powers, Paul Henry McMahill, Jack Palmer, George Murello, and Jeff Hartz.

Christine Corday: RELATIVE POINTS is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Lisa Melandri, Executive Director.

Related Events

Press & Patron Preview

Friday, January 18, 10:00–11:00 am
Join artists and curators for an exclusive introduction to the exhibitions. RSVP to Eddie Silva at 314.535.0770 x313 or esilva@camstl.org.

Opening Night

Friday, January 18
Member Preview 6:00–7:00 pm
Public Reception 7:00–9:00 pm

Artist Talk: Christine Corday

Saturday, January 18, 11:00 am



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All programs, dates, and times are subject to change.

About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis presents, supports, and celebrates the art of our time. It is the premier museum in St. Louis dedicated to contemporary art. Focused on a dynamic array of changing exhibitions, CAM provides a thought-provoking program that reflects and contributes to the global cultural landscape. Through the diverse perspectives offered in its exhibitions, public programs, and educational initiatives, CAM actively engages a range of audiences to challenge their perceptions. It is a site for discovery, a gathering place in which to experience and enjoy contemporary visual culture. CAM is located in the Grand Center Arts District.

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