

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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The logo for the Art Institute of Chicago, featuring the text "ART INSTITUTE CHICAGO" in white, stacked vertically, on a red square background.

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**THE ART INSTITUTE SHOWCASES THREE EMERGING PHOTOGRAPHY TALENTS
IN LATEST INSTALLMENT OF *EXPOSURE* SERIES**

**Matt Keegan, Katie Paterson, and Heather Rasmussen Make Their
Major Museum Debut in Chicago September 3, 2011, through March 4, 2012**

The Art Institute of Chicago's Photography Department is pleased to present its fourth installment of *Exposure* (previously *On the Scene*)—a series of exhibitions devoted to bringing talented, emerging photographers to a wider audience. In this latest presentation of *Exposure*, curator Katherine Bussard has selected artists **Matt Keegan** (American, b. 1976), **Katie Paterson** (Scottish, b. 1981), and **Heather Rasmussen** (American, b. 1982) to showcase their latest projects in the **Bucksbaum Gallery (G188)** of the museum's Modern Wing. The exhibition—which unites images exploring everything from the urban expanses of New York and Chicago to the recesses of deep space to the global shipping industry—will be on view **September 3, 2011 through March 4, 2012**. This is the first major art museum exhibition for Keegan, Paterson, and Rasmussen.

Matt Keegan: Site-specific Installation, 2011

In this installation, created specifically for the Art Institute, Matt Keegan treated New York City and Chicago as sites for an investigation into the relationship between a city and its past, and between a city and its inhabitants. The results of his research are presented through a convergence of symbolic colors, rolled sheet metal, appropriated imagery, narrative, and photographs. Together these elements invite a comparison of urban experiences, both past and present, in the two cities. This installation demonstrates Keegan's attention to physical structures, language, images, history, and the interconnections among these areas.

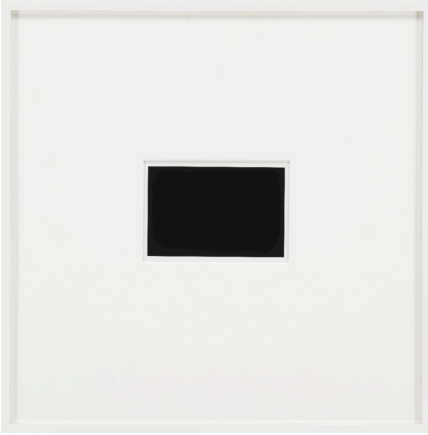
In *Untitled (Old Bordeaux)*, Keegan united seemingly random photographs—taken in Chicago and New York—by placing them on expansive metal bands painted in “Old Bordeaux” burgundy, the color of nearly all of the Chicago River bridges. Similarly, *Untitled (Federal Blue)*, created in New York, represents one of that city’s standard bridge colors. Beyond the symbolic paint color, the shape of *Untitled (Federal Blue)* links Chicago and New York through a reference to skyscrapers and, by extension, upward urban expansion. Within the gallery, the tower takes the form of an I-beam, suggesting basic skyscraper technology (and building materials), and a recognizable shape in most metropolitan skylines.

Keegan’s artist book, *A History of New York*, connects Chicago and New York through a differentiated chronological analysis of their development. The book juxtaposes an illustrated history of New York with textual references to the same historical moments in Chicago. The image and text comparison highlights the similarities and disjunctions within the development of the two cities and, in turn, speaks to the larger narrative of urban development in the United States.



Katie Paterson: *History of Darkness* (2010)

Katie Paterson said of her work, “I like to work on the brink of impossibility.” Combining scientific research and artistic media, she challenges and increases our understanding of the universe. In *History of Darkness*, an ongoing project, the artist locates various moments in the history of the universe in images of the deepest recesses of space. The space-time continuum—the scientific discovery that measurements of distance also constitute units of time—is expressed in photographs of faraway sites that simultaneously depict earlier moments in the cosmos. Working in Hawaii with one of the most powerful telescopes in the world, Paterson photographs points in deep space that receive no celestial illumination. Her resulting slide archive is organized by these points’ distance from the Earth—ranging from 1 to 13.2 billion light-years—and each image is inscribed with its specific location in space. For this exhibition, Paterson printed a selection of images from her slide archive, a small sampling of a potentially infinite and ever-changing group of photographs.



Outer space has always been a popular subject in photography; Louis Daguerre attempted to photograph the moon in 1839, the very year that the invention of photography was made public. However, in Paterson's space imagery, the visual record begins to fall apart. The pure black images all appear identical, thwarting conventional expectations of photographic veracity and rendering the works useless for scientific study. *History of Darkness*, at once a clear depiction

of space and a negation of the visual, emphasizes the futility of the artist's actions as she amasses scientifically accurate images of nothing. Because every image appears identical, the archive serves little functional purpose; instead, it invites philosophical speculation and suggests our inability to truly depict the universe.

Heather Rasmussen: Selections from the Series *DestructConstruct*, 2008–2011

During her graduate studies at the California Institute of Arts, Heather Rasmussen was drawn to the international shipping containers stacked in the Port of Los Angeles. Although she initially photographed only the port, her interest became increasingly focused on shipping containers.

With their bright colors and immediately recognizable rectangular shapes, these crates recall children's toy blocks. Rasmussen soon began crafting miniature paper versions from cardstock that matched the signature colors of the various shipping companies.



This crucial shift in focus allowed Rasmussen to move beyond her local environment and seek a link between photographs of her container replicas and

issues surrounding international shipping. Containerization, the use of standard metal boxes that can be stacked in an organized, efficient manner, has facilitated global shipping since the 1960s. The increased volume of this method creates hazard, and dockside and open-water catastrophes. Rasmussen selected internet images of crushed, sinking, or toppling containers in order to re-create these accidents in the studio. The tiny size and delicate material of her paper boxes emphasize the vulnerability of their real-life counterparts. In these works, Rasmussen removes all contextual clues, leaving the viewer with symbolic representations of natural or human disaster in geometric patterns of color and form. She titled each photograph with the

name of the shipping vessel, as well as the location and date of the mishap, highlighting the dangers inherent in the precarious business of global shipping.

The artists featured in *Exposure* will be discussing their works at the Art Institute during the run of this exhibition. Heather Rasmussen will be speaking about her work on Thursday, October 20, 2011; Matt Keegan on Thursday, December 8, 2011; and Katie Paterson will appear on Thursday, February 9, 2012. All lectures will take place in the museum's Morton Auditorium at 6:00 pm.

Exposure: Matt Keegan, Katie Paterson, Heather Rasmussen is organized by the Art Institute of Chicago and is curated by Katherine Bussard, Associate Curator of Photography.

Images:

Matt Keegan, *A History of New York*, 2011. Artist's book. Courtesy of the artist. D'Amelio Terras, New York
Katie Paterson, *History of Darkness* (detail), 2010. Gelatin silver print. Courtesy of the artist. James Cohen Gallery, New York.
Heather Rasmussen. *Untitled (New Orleans, Louisiana, September 10, 2005)*, 2010. Courtesy of the artist.

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MUSEUM HOURS

10:30 am–5:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

10:30 am–8:00 pm Thursday

10:30 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

Museum free to Illinois residents on first and second Wednesdays of every month.

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

ADMISSION

Adults \$18.00 Includes all special exhibitions

Children 14 and over, students, and seniors \$12.00 Includes all special exhibitions

Chicago residents receive a \$2.00 discount with proof of residency

Children under 14 always free

Members always free

City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a "Museum Passport" card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including the Art Institute of Chicago.