

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE ART INSTITUTE HOSTS SNAP: THE THIRD PHOTOGRAPHY BENEFIT GALA
Event Celebrates the Exhibition *Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian Photocollage*
and the New Modern Wing Photography Gallery

The Art Institute of Chicago's Department of Photography is thrilled to host **Snap: The Third Photography Benefit Gala** on **October 16, 2009**—one of the most anticipated art parties of the year. This year's event celebrates the exhibition *Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian Photocollage* and the new Modern Wing photography gallery, which showcases some of the best contemporary works in the Art Institute's permanent collection. Snap co-chairs are **Brad Ballast**, Harris Bank's Managing Director of Community Affairs, and **Barbara Bluhm-Kaul**.



Guests to the Snap gala will begin the evening with cocktails in the Modern Wing's Griffin Court at 6:30 pm, followed by a seated dinner at 7:30 pm in Terzo Piano, the museum's new fine dining restaurant. At 8:30 pm, guests can bid in a live auction of portrait sessions with such acclaimed contemporary photographers as **Rineke Dijkstra**, **Kota Ezawa**, **Laura Letinsky**, **Vik Muniz**, and **Carrie Schneider**. The live auction will be conducted by Denise Bethel, Director of the Photographs Department at Sotheby's in New York.

After the auction, guests are welcome to enjoy the *Playing with Pictures* exhibition and the Modern Wing photography gallery, along with cordials in the Grand Staircase. Gala-goers are encouraged to dress in vintage or modern cocktail attire, and will have the chance to “get snapped” by photographers throughout the evening.

All proceeds from Snap: The Third Photography Gala will go towards the acquisitions and programs of Art Institute’s photography department. Harris Bank is the lead sponsor of Snap; additional support is provided by Sotheby’s, the Bluhm Family, and United Airlines.

The Exhibition: *Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian Photocollage*



Sixty years ahead of the avant-garde, aristocratic Victorian women were already experimenting with photocollage. The compositions they made with photographs and watercolors are whimsical and fantastical, combining human heads and animal bodies, placing people into imaginary landscapes, and morphing faces into common household objects. With sharp wit and dramatic shifts of scale akin to those Alice

experienced in Wonderland, these images stand the rather serious conventions of photography in the 1860s and 1870s on their heads. Such images, often made for albums, reveal the educated minds as well as accomplished hands of their makers, as they take on new theories of evolution, the changing role of photography, and the strict conventions of aristocratic society. This first-ever exhibition on Victorian photo albums at the Art Institute will showcase the best albums and loose pages from collections across the United States, Europe, and Australia.

IMAGES:

Cheri Eisenberg Photography

Marie-Blanche-Hennelle Fournier. *Untitled page from the Madame B Album*, 1870s. Mary and Leigh Block Endowment.

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MUSEUM HOURS

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

10:30 am–8:00 pm Thursday

10:00 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

TARGET FREE THURSDAY EVENINGS AFTER 5:00 pm

SUMMER HOURS (from Memorial Day to Labor Day)

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

10:30 am–9:00 pm Thursday, Friday

10:00 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

TARGET FREE SUMMER EVENINGS THURSDAY AND FRIDAY AFTER 5:00 pm

FREE FEBRUARY 1 TO 28

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

ADMISSION

Adults \$18.00 Includes all special exhibitions and coat check

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

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

Children under 14 always free

Members always free

Free Evenings are free to all. 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.

The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park, located across from Millennium Park. Visitors can enter the museum via the Michigan Avenue entrance or the Millennium Park entrance on Monroe Street.