

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS PREVIEW

Fri, April 26, 11 am

RSVP to press@henryart.org



Cecilia Vicuña. *Balsa Snake Raft to Escape the Flood*, 2017. Installation with found materials sourced from New Orleans, Chile, and New York: debris, bamboo, willows, twigs, fishing line, beads, rope, net, styrofoam, plastic, feathers. [Installation view, *Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen*, 2017. Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans.] Photo: Alex Marks.

Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen

April 27 – September 15, 2019

SEATTLE—The Henry Art Gallery is proud to present *Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen*, the first major United States solo exhibition of work by this influential Chilean-born artist. It traces the artist's career-long commitment to exploring discarded and displaced materials, peoples, and landscapes in a time of global climate change.

Working within the overlapping discourses of conceptual art, land art, poetry, and feminist art practices, Vicuña has long refused categorical distinctions, operating fluidly between concept and craft, text and textile. The exhibition includes sculpture, installation, drawing, video, and text-based work from Vicuña's practice since the late 1960s, weaving together the artist's many artistic disciplines as well as communities with shared relationships to the land and sea. The works evoke the ephemeral qualities of the landscape and reframe dematerialization as more than a formal consequence of 1960s conceptualism

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but as a consequence of radical climate change as well—and in both cases—as a process that shapes public memory and responsibility.

Included in the exhibition is a large selection of Vicuña's *precario* sculptures produced over the last four decades that feature found objects in lyrical juxtaposition, as well as a recent, monumental structure created out of scavenged materials from the ever-diminishing Louisiana coast. Also on view will be the installation *Burnt Quipu* (2018), in which lengths of dyed wool hang floor to ceiling connecting earth and sky in commemoration of recent forest fires in the greater West Coast region. *Burnt Quipu* is part of Vicuña's longstanding artistic exploration of the ancient Andean writing tradition of "talking knots," a sophisticated communication system repressed during colonization.

Cecilia Vicuña (born 1948) has lived between her native country of Chile and the United States since 1980. A poet, visual artist, and filmmaker, Vicuña is the author of more than twenty books, and exhibits and performs internationally. She is also the cofounder of oysi.org, a site for oral culture and poetics of the world.

A public opening of the exhibition will be held on Friday, April 26 from 7 to 8:30 PM. A performance by Cecilia Vicuña, followed by a conversation with the exhibition co-curators Andrea Andersson and Julia Bryan-Wilson will be held on Saturday, April 27 at 2 PM.

Cecilia Vicuña: About to Happen is organized by the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans (CAC), and co-curated by Andrea Andersson, The Helis Foundation Chief Curator of Visual Arts at the CAC, and Julia Bryan-Wilson, Doris and Clarence Malo Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art, University of California, Berkeley. The presentation at the Henry is organized by Nina Bozicnik, Associate Curator. Lead support for this exhibition is provided by the Walker Family Foundation. This project is also supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts and by a gift from Virginia and Bagley Wright. Media sponsorship is provided by KUOW.

ABOUT THE HENRY

A museum of contemporary art and ideas, Henry Art Gallery presents exhibitions by a multi-national roster of emerging and mid-career artists. Known for taking risks and for allowing space for uncertain outcomes, we anticipate the conversations and opinions that will be important and relevant in the field.

www.henryart.org

HOURS & ADMISSION

Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun: 11 AM – 4 PM

Thurs: 11 AM - 9 PM

Mon, Tues: Closed

\$10 general, \$6 seniors (62+); free to Henry members; UW students, faculty and staff; students, and children.

Admission is free every Sunday, as well as on First Thursdays.

CONTACTS

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