

# DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

**A TALE OF TODAY: NATE YOUNG AND MIKA HORIBUCHI TO OPEN AT  
CHICAGO'S DRIEHAUS MUSEUM ON SEPTEMBER 26, 2020**

**For the Second Exhibition in the Driehaus Museum's Contemporary Art Program,  
Two Chicago-based Artists to Create Site-Specific Works  
Offering New Perspectives on the Museum's Gilded Age History**

**Opening Day Live-Streamed Panel Discussion will Explore How Historic House Museums  
Can Connect the Past with the Present**

**CHICAGO — September 10, 2020** — The Richard H. Driehaus Museum is pleased to announce September 26 as the opening date of the second exhibition in its *A Tale of Today* contemporary art initiative; it was previously postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the success of last year's installation by Yinka Shonibare CBE, the museum has commissioned two contemporary Chicago-based artists – Nate Young and Mika Horibuchi – to create site-specific installations working with and responding to the complex history of the museum's 1883 building and its architecture.

Conceived as an opportunity for audiences to view the legacy of the Gilded Age – the museum's main area of focus – from different perspectives, the second iteration of *A Tale of Today* continues to explore the issues that make that history relevant to society today. The exhibition is curated by Kekeli Sumah, the 2020 *A Tale of Today* curatorial fellow, with guidance from the Driehaus Museum's executive leadership and curatorial department. *A Tale of Today: Nate Young and Mika Horibuchi* will be on view from September 26, 2019 through January 17, 2020. A press preview will take place on Tuesday, September 22 from 10-12PM, by appointment only.

In association with EXPO CHICAGO, the museum has also announced an opening day panel discussion between Young, Horibuchi, Sumah, and three guest speakers: Ann Lui, Assistant Professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and founding principal of Future Firm; Ross Jordan, Curatorial Manager at the Jane Addams Hull House Museum; and Stephanie Cristello, Artistic Director of EXPO CHICAGO. The panel, which will take place at 2:30 CDT on Saturday, September 26, will explore how historic house museums can leverage their architectures and legacies to connect the past with the present. The panel will also discuss how the site-specific work of Young and Horibuchi draws on family, history, architecture, and museum practices to explore how house museums can bridge our understanding of the past to current discourses on representation, truth, and the role of exhibitions.

“Presenting contemporary art in a Gilded Age setting allows the museum to engage with new audiences in new ways, as many will be experiencing this type of architecture and its history for the first time,” said founder and president of the Board of Trustees, Richard H. Driehaus. “This exhibition provides a unique opportunity to demonstrate the importance of architecture and sense of place from the incomparable vantage point of the Nickerson Mansion while also showcasing new artists in this historic setting.”

Nate Young and Mika Horibuchi were selected for the way their work will thoughtfully consider and complement the Driehaus Museum's “home,” the Nickerson Mansion – renowned as Gilded Age Chicago's “Marble Palace” and located near the city's famous Magnificent Mile. Addressing the material and narrative history of the mansion, the artists will respond to the interiors and architecture of the building, creating newly commissioned additions which invite the audience to understand and experience the history of a place from different perspectives.

In the east galleries on the museum's second floor, Nate Young will combine sculptural installation and his signature woodwork to create uncanny doubles of the existing cabinets and drawers. His skillful woodwork and delicate precision recall the craftsmanship lauded during the Gilded Age while allowing his work to seamlessly blend into the existing furnishings of the mansion. Some of the artist's cabinets and drawers will contain bone holograms, calling attention to the invisibility of certain narratives throughout history – stories and people we know exist but remain inaccessible and forgotten. In a carefully crafted mahogany clock, Young has made the mechanism go backwards, encouraging the viewer to go back in time and unearth lost narratives.

Young's work for the museum will continue his exploration of his great-grandfather's journey from the rural South to the urban North during the Great Migration. In a series of text paintings, Young has transcribed fragments of a letter written by his great-grandfather, reminding the viewer of the details of a specific lost history shared in part or full by many Chicagoans.

Mika Horibuchi's installations use trompe l'oeil as a conceptual framework to pose questions about representation, ownership, and authorship. In Roland's Room, Horibuchi will explore Samuel M. and Matilda P. Nickerson's art collection, which included a notable selection of artifacts from Japan and China. The couple donated the majority of these objects to the Art Institute of Chicago in 1900. Using the trompe l'oeil technique, Horibuchi will create a series of paintings that mimic the existing didactic signs used throughout the museum. These paintings will simulate the photographic documentation of the Asian artifacts, but the accompanying text will be absent, blurring out the objects' history and provenance. Revisiting mainstream historical narratives, the absence of any explanatory text here creates space for new narrators to write history. When the objects were removed from their place of origin, decontextualized, and presented in new environments, uses and meanings were added and lost in translation.

In Samuel M. Nickerson's former bedroom, Horibuchi has used oil painting on linen or panel to create a number of works that appear as objects which have been in the room for decades. Painted in shades of cool gray, these objects would appear to completely blend into their surroundings if viewed through a black and white photo filter. These include a painted portrait of Mr. Nickerson that mimics the style of a portrait of Lucius George Fisher (the mansion's second owner) by Ralph Clarkson in the Smoking Room on the first floor, as well as a grey painted carpet on linen that borrows motifs from the textile wallcovering pattern that lines the room. Alongside these works, Horibuchi has chosen to display pieces borrowed from the museum's collections – artifacts original to the Nickerson Mansion – thereby inviting the viewer to question what is authentic and what is fake, suggesting that all narratives are fictional.

“To make conversations about the Gilded Age relevant to today's society, it is important to have contemporary emerging voices from the city join the conversation,” said curator Kekeli Sumah. “Both Nate Young and Mika Horibuchi's installations invite audiences to reconsider and expand their perspectives on history while creating the opportunity to discover new narratives.”

*A Tale of Today: Nate Young and Mika Horibuchi* will be supported by additional virtual programming that engages with themes explored in the exhibition; details will be announced in the coming months.

*A Tale of Today: Nate Young and Mika Horibuchi* is organized by The Richard H. Driehaus Museum. The exhibition is presented by Northern Trust. Additional support is provided by Eugene and Jean Stark, Gary Metzner and Scott Johnson, and the Richard H. Driehaus Annual Exhibition Fund.

### **About Nate Young**

Nate Young (b. 1981) is an artist working primarily in wood who draws on history, semiotics and spirituality to explore the connections between collective and familial history, and between the

material and the divine. Young's work has been included in exhibitions at the Suburban (Chicago), The Studio Museum in Harlem (New York), the California African American Museum (Los Angeles), the Soap Factory's Minnesota Biennial (Minneapolis), Room East (New York) and Monique Meloche (Chicago). Young received his BA from Northwestern College and his MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. Young is represented by Monique Meloche in Chicago, where he had his third solo show with the gallery earlier this year.

#### **About Mika Horibuchi**

Mika Horibuchi (b. 1991) is an artist interested in tricks and slips in visual perception. Horibuchi's work has been included in exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago), PATRON (Chicago), KMAC Museum (Louisville), and the Chicago Cultural Center. Horibuchi received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Horibuchi is represented by Patron Gallery in Chicago.

#### **About *A Tale of Today***

Formally titled *A Tale of Today: New Artists at the Driehaus Museum*, the contemporary art series launched in 2019 and was conceived to continue at least three years, with variations on the program that explore new perspectives and feature new artists. The series takes its name from *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today*, the 1873 book by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner that gave the era its name. *A Tale of Today: Yinka Shonibare CBE* — the artist's first museum exhibition in Chicago in more than five years — launched the series. *A Tale of Today* also includes a fellowship program that engages with Chicago-based emerging artists, promoting their careers and expanding their networks.

#### **About the Richard H. Driehaus Museum**

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum explores the Gilded Age through the art, architecture, and design of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Once known as Chicago's "Marble Palace" and located just steps from the Magnificent Mile, the collection of period decorative arts is presented in an immersive experience within the mansion. Temporary exhibitions organized by the Driehaus Museum and its partners place the Gilded Age in context, as do vibrant educational and cultural programs designed to illuminate the history, culture, and urban fabric of Chicago.

Richard H. Driehaus, the museum's founder and namesake, is a Chicago entrepreneur and preservationist with a long history of supporting projects in the arts and culture.

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