



**Portal: Governors Island Returns in September,  
With More Than 85 Artists Presented Across Historic Colonels Row**

**The Annual Art Fair Opens Labor Day Weekend,  
With Public Hours Every Subsequent Weekend in September**

**A Special Late Evening Event Will be Held on Saturday, August 31**

**New York (July 24, 2019)**—On August 31, the nonprofit 4heads will open its annual art fair, Portal: Governors Island (formerly Governors Island Art Fair). The selling fair will feature 89 emerging and mid-career artists, whose work spans the spectrum of artistic genre and media, from painting and drawing to sculptural installations to video and digital works. This year’s edition of the fair will be presented across seven of the historic homes on Colonels Row as well as on the adjacent outdoor lawns. As with prior iterations of the fair, each artist is provided with an individual room, connective space, or exterior plot, allowing artists to leverage the environments to create micro-exhibitions as well as immersive, large-scale installations. Now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year, the fair heralds the start of the fall visual arts season in New York, offering a spirited atmosphere that invites active engagement between visitors and exhibitors and providing an essential platform for today’s working artists. Portal: Governors Island opens Labor Day weekend and will be open every Saturday and Sunday through the month of September.

**A Press Preview for Portal will be held on Wednesday, August 28, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.**

**A special evening event, to celebrate the opening of the fair, will be held on Saturday, August 31, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM, allowing visitors enjoy the fair presentations during evening hours and connect with participants over drinks and light food. The evening event coincides with special late hours on Governors Island that day.**

Portal: Governors Island, which first launched in 2008 as Governors Island Art Fair, was among the first major art events to take place on Governors Island. Since interest in the Island as a cultural destination has grown, in particular over the last several years, 4heads has remained steadfast in maintaining its presence, continuing to provide working artists with a place to show new and recent work and to build their networks of support. To maintain a diverse and dynamic roster of participants, 4heads continues to offer fair participation to artists free of charge, with 70% of sales also going directly to the artists. As part of the organization’s vision to expand opportunities for its community of artists, especially those without formal representation, 4heads moved to change its name in spring 2019 to Portal, as a signal that other iterations of the fair are being planned for future dates and locations around New York City.

“Today, there are abundant conversations about art fairs—about the models and frameworks of fairs, about their sustainability, and about who gets to participate and at what cost and broader impact. But even those discussions only capture a small fragment of the realities and experiences of most artists and arts



organizations,” said Antony Zito, a 4heads co-founder. “We see our work in the arts community, and especially with the fair, as essential to helping level the playing field and provide opportunity for a greater range of artists to share their voices, visions, and works. After 12 years, the landscape in which we operate has become smaller and more difficult to maintain, but 4heads remains committed to serving artists and to expanding opportunities for people to experience and connect with art and artists.”

The 2019 edition of Portal: Governors Island will feature 70 artists with indoor presentations and 19 artists with outdoor installations. The featured artists were selected from approximately 800 proposals submitted through an open call over the summer, supported by 4heads outreach to artist communities, in particular those that have generally been underserved. Artists were chosen through a tiered jurying process by 4heads co-founders Nicole Laemmle, Jack Robinson, and Antony Zito as well as artists Lori Nelson and Simona Prives, who have both shown consistently at the annual fair and have over the last year taken on more formal roles with 4heads. The selection includes artists new to the 4heads community, as well as those that have shown previously at the group’s art fairs. In discussing the selection process, the 4heads team said, “The quality of the applications this year was particularly strong, which made our jobs in choosing artists more challenging. However, this of course means that the experience for visitors will be exceptionally compelling this year.”

“We are very excited to open our fair to artists and the public once again this year, and to have the continued opportunity to share our love for the historic sites on Governors Island through the lens of contemporary art. Every year the participating artists pour their energy and enthusiasm for art into the creation of Portal: Governors Island, and we know this year will be infused with the same spirit and sense of community,” said Laemmle. “We see Portal as a platform that not only invites a diversity of artists but a diversity of audiences to participate and connect with each other and with the experience of art. We look forward to kicking off the fall arts season and to capturing the vitality of arts production in the city and well beyond.”

A complete roster of participating artists is available on the 4heads website and also as a PDF on request. A selection of highlights from the upcoming edition of Portal: Governors Island follows below.

**Sherri Hay (New York & Toronto):** Hay’s work is concerned with empathy, movement, and the shifting relationships between objects and space with the passage of time. These meditations are expressed through sculpture, installation, video, and performance pieces. For the upcoming edition of Portal, Hay will create an installation using sand, counterweight, and balance. Each day, over the course of six hours, two objects will shift in space and change shape in a very slow and subtle conversation with one another. Hay sees her role as an instigator of process, creating an environment in which action can occur but allowing it to transpire naturally. Her work has been previously shown at such institutions as the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), Museum of Canadian Contemporary Art, and Powerplant in Toronto, among others.

# PORTAL

**Anne Muntges (New York):** Muntges' practice is inspired by the artifacts that capture and suggest human existence—the spaces they occupy and the imprints they leave within the urban and natural world. Items like discarded signs, manhandled objects, and graffiti often become the sources and launch points for her drawings, produced in graphite, charcoal, and pen. Muntges' output embraces traditional works on paper and panel, while also extending the possibilities of drawing to large-scale installation. For her presentation, Muntges will transform a space on Colonials Row into an immersive environment, covering the walls and interior objects with line drawings done in black acrylic paint pens and dislocating the viewer's sense of perspective and space.

**Aaron Li-Hill (New York):** Li-Hill's work examines the complexities of rapid development in the modern age. In particular, his large-scale murals, sculptures, and installations highlight the devastating effects of capitalist culture on the individual psyche, the causes and impacts of migration, and the lasting imprint humanity has made on the natural world. Leveraging the formal vocabularies of graffiti, graphic design, and traditional fine art media, Li-Hill creates dense tangles of imagery that suggest the intricacies of these issues and difficulty of deciphering and finding solutions to them. For Portal, Li-Hill will produce an outdoor sculptural installation that focuses on issues of climate change. The work will include several central figures surrounded by a storm of other objects and images.

**Lewis Derogene, known artistically as PhenomenaLewis (Connecticut):** PhenomenaLewis, creates work across a wide range of media, including installation, performance, photography, sculpture, and video. Her practice is guided by her childhood memories, personal experiences, and writings. For Portal, she will present a selection of photographs from her *Preoccupied Spirits* series. Produced in black and white, the series explores the separation of body and mind—the idea that one can be physically present while their thoughts and emotions are elsewhere. Foggy, shadowy elements within the images capture the moment of dislocation and produce the sensation of a spiritual presence.

**Federico Muelas (New York):** For Muelas, art is the platform through which we can best engage with and understand the social and personal dynamics of life. To produce his installations and projects, he employs a wide range of tools, from augmented reality technologies to other electronics to charcoal, metal, and wood. At Portal, Muelas will present *Passage*, a large-format mural activated by projected media. Muelas developed the idea for the work while visiting Malaga, Spain, where one can admire the colors and compositions of the cliffs of the Prebetic Mountains. The mural, which is produced in charcoal on paper, captures these formations, while the projections give the work the essence of three-dimensionality, creating an overall feeling of a cave that one can step into.

**Kerry Lessard (New York):** Lessard's work explores familial rituals such as children's birthday parties and family photo shoots as well as domestic life more broadly. Drawing on found photography, Lessard translates these scenes into large-scale paintings, often cutting and obscuring portions of the image. By removing the original from its context and omitting certain aspects, Lessard invites speculation on the history and origin of her scenes while also producing a gap for the viewer to fill in their own narrative and



emotional response. For the upcoming edition of Portal, Lessard will present approximately a dozen of her paintings, offering visitors a snapshot of her practice.

**About 4heads:**

4heads is a 501(c)3 nonprofit arts organization run by artists for artists. It was launched in New York in 2008, when Nicole Laemmle, Jack Robinson, and Antony Zito, who are working artists themselves, saw an opportunity to create a platform that would serve emerging artists and the local community through exhibitions, education programs, and artistic collaborations. The organization's DIY spirit helps catalyze the ongoing dialogue between artists and people from all walks of life. Its diverse slate of initiatives includes art fairs, arts-education for underserved communities, and a summer Artists in Residence program on Governors Island. 4heads is committed to shedding new light on hidden culture and bringing new life to unexpected and unique spaces across the city.

**Getting to Portal: Governors Island:**

Governors Island is less than 10 minutes away from Manhattan and Brooklyn by ferry. Ferries run from Lower Manhattan every day from the Battery Maritime Building at 10 South Street with service from Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 6 on Saturdays, Sundays and Labor Day.

All weekday and weekend afternoon ferries from Brooklyn and Manhattan are \$2 round trip for adults. Children under 12, NYCID holders and Governors Island members ride for free at all times and senior citizens' fares are half price. Morning ferries (10 AM and 11 AM and 11:30 AM from Manhattan and 11 AM and 11:30 AM from Brooklyn) on Saturdays and Sundays are free for all. There is no surcharge for bicycles. For schedule and more information, visit <http://govisland.com>.

NYC Ferry also stops at Governors Island Pier 102 on Saturdays and Sundays via the East River and South Brooklyn Route. For more tickets, schedule and more information visit <http://www.ferry.nyc/>.

**Portal: Governors Island Hours and Admission:**

Every Saturday and Sunday from August 31 – September 29, 2019.

11:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Admission is free.

Exhibition catalogues are available for purchase for \$20. For further information contact [info@4heads.org](mailto:info@4heads.org) or visit [www.4heads.org](http://www.4heads.org).

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