

Deborah Oropallo



SF

248 Utah Street
SF, CA 94103
+ 415 399 1439

NY

313 W 14th Street 2F
New York, NY
By appointment only

WEB

www.cclarkgallery.com

‘Migrating Bodies’ unveiled at Schneider

By Jeffrey Gillespie
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The Schneider Museum of Art at Southern Oregon University launched a special exhibition Aug. 6 entitled “Migrating Bodies: For(saking) Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

The exhibit is co-curated by Jill Hartz, who recently retired to Ashland after serving for over a decade as executive director of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art in Eugene. Hartz is known for various coups in the academic art world, including the coordination of a showing of Ai Weiwei’s “Zodiac Heads/Circle of Animals” at the Schnitzer in 2017. She is joined in the current program by Richard Herskowitz, artistic and executive director of the Ashland Independent Film Festival, and Schneider Museum Director Scott Malbourn. The exhibition is a collaboration with AIFF.

The show will include work of Tannaz Farsi, an Iranian-American visual artist living and working in Oregon. Farsi’s work deals with “alternative methods of remembering and recording to prolong the presence of easily erased moments that arise from the complexities of colonialist legacies.”

She has been awarded grants from the National Foundation for the Arts and the Ford Foundation, among others, and has been exhibited at PICA and DISJECTA in Portland as well as at various museums in the Pacific Northwest and nationally.

Guillermo Gómez-Peña, the prominent Mexican-Chicano artist born in Mexico City, will also be featured. Gómez-Peña is a polymathic creative who operates as an activist, poet and novelist and as a videographer and performance artist. He is a founding member of the Border Arts Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo, a San Diego-based artist collective.

South African born Mohau Modisakeng lives and works between Johannesburg and Cape Town, South Africa, and will also be on view at the Schneider. Modisakeng, who has worked primarily as a sculptor, has shown at various international galleries including London's Saatchi Gallery. He is a graduate of the Michaelis School of Fine Art in Cape Town.

Deborah Oropallo, who is known for her iconic digital montages featuring interpretations of historical figures through a lens of gender and symbolism, is one of the American-born artists being shown. She has been featured in biennials at the Whitney Museum and the Corcoran Museum. Her work is represented in many major museum collections nationally, and she is a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Award.

Andy Rappaport is an American artist who is collaborating with Oropallo in an ongoing creative process that has so far yielded more than eight video projects. Rappaport and Oropallo are showing "Flight" (2019) a multi-channel video installation, at this event. The title refers to mass migration and global displacement.

The Schneider show will also present work by SUPERFLEX, an arts collective based in Denmark that explores economic forces, democratic production scenarios and self-organization.

"Humans have always been on the move. From nomads to nation builders, we have sought a better life, however we've chosen to define that goal. The causes of migration and displacement, including climate change and its attendant famines, fires and 500-year floods that are now happening yearly; war; religious persecution; slavery; and commerce seem unending and are, if anything, growing more dire," says Hartz in her exhibition essay.

“Migrating Bodies: For(saking) Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” will run from through Oct. 10 at the Schneider Museum of Art at Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University, 1250 Siskiyou Blvd., in Ashland.

<https://ashlandtidings.com/lifestyle/migrating-bodies-unveiled-at-schneider-08-06-2020>