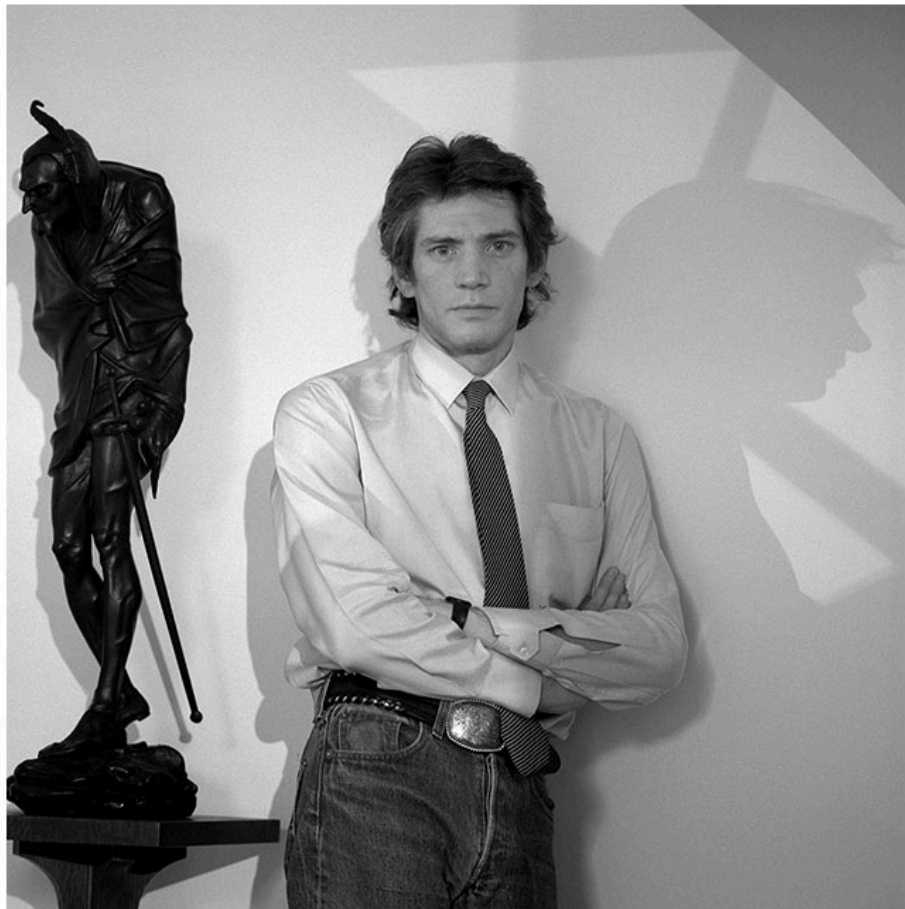


Art Daily (artdaily.com)
August 31st, 2015



FotoFocus announces final program for Mapplethorpe + 25



Jeannette Montgomery Barron, "Robert Mapplethorpe," 1987, Courtesy of ClampArt, New York City. ©Jeannette Montgomery Barron.

CINCINNATI, OH.- FotoFocus and the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) in Cincinnati, Ohio, are announced the final program for the symposium on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Robert Mapplethorpe's controversial exhibition, *The Perfect Moment*. Under the leadership of Mary Ellen Goeke, Executive Director of FotoFocus, Contemporary Arts Center Director, Raphaela Platow, and curated by FotoFocus Artistic Director Kevin Moore, the program will include an international roster of curators, critics, artists, and art world professionals - with keynotes by Germano Celant and Catherine Opie - who will meet for a two-day event on October 23 and 24, 2015, at the CAC, to discuss the significance and implications of the exhibition and Mapplethorpe's career and legacy as these have evolved over the past 25 years.

Robert Mapplethorpe's *The Perfect Moment* opened on April 7, 1990, at the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati in a climate of national cultural unrest. The exhibition immediately sparked controversy when politicians took offense to the show and the use of public funds provided by the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) to support it, leading to the indictment of the CAC and Director Dennis Barrie on obscenity charges. Similar controversy had resulted in the cancellation of the exhibition tour at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the previous year. The historic trial that followed - where for the first time a museum and its director faced criminal charges because of an art exhibition - brought national attention to the subject of public funding for the arts, as well as arts censorship.

Twenty-five years later, numerous reassessments of the artist's career have prompted fresh insights. The symposium, *Mapplethorpe + 25*, will revolve around this revitalized interest in Mapplethorpe as curators, artists, critics and others explore the broad question: what does Mapplethorpe's work tell us about the culture we have inherited and inhabit today?

"With the 25th anniversary of Robert Mapplethorpe's exhibition, we wanted to revisit the past as it is the basis of history; it reminds us of where we come from and who we have become," says FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator, Kevin Moore. "Mapplethorpe's work rather ambitiously proposes a far-reaching idea of universalism, of timeless values common to all of humanity across myriad cultural geographies. Yet his work is also idiosyncratic, personal, of a particular historical moment - the politically conservative 1980s and the height of the AIDS crisis. To comprehend his work as both timeless and timely, as an amalgam of a perfect world and an imperfect moment, is to grasp the essential need to make art, to write history, and to contemplate both."

"It's remarkable that it has been 25 years since Mapplethorpe's exhibition and the national uproar, and we are thrilled that the symposium is taking place right where it all started," said Contemporary Arts Center Director Raphaela Platow. "Showcasing Mapplethorpe's work elevated the CAC to a national platform as a place that fought for new projects and ideas. What many don't realize is at the time, that was a very risky statement for an institution to make."

**SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM AT THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER (CAC),
CINCINNATI, OHIO:
OCTOBER 23 and 24, 2015**

Program subject to change

Friday, October 23

Opening Film Montage

Welcome and Introduction by FotoFocus and CAC

Keynote speaker: Germano Celant, Independent Curator, Milan-New York

Saturday, October 24

Welcome and Overview

Panel: The Exhibition, The Contemporary Arts Center, and Arts Censorship

Moderated by Raphaela Platow, Director, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, with panelists: Dennis Barrie, Principal of Barrie Projects and former Contemporary Arts Center Director; Jock Reynolds, Director, Yale University Art Gallery; H. Louis Sirkin, Senior Counsel, Santen & Hughes, and former trial counsel to Dennis Barrie and the Contemporary Arts Center; and Michael Stout, President, The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation

Comment by: Robert Reid-Pharr, Professor, The Graduate Center, City University of New York

Panel: The Artist's Circle and Studio

Moderated by Phillip Gelter, author and photo historian, with panelists: Robert Sherman, promoter, Chateau Marmont, Los Angeles; Judy Linn, artist, New York; and Carol Squiers, Curator, International Center of Photography, New York

Panel: Curators Curate Mapplethorpe

Moderated by Kevin Moore, Artistic Director and Curator, FotoFocus, with panelists: Jennifer Blessing, Senior Curator of Photography, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; Britt Salvesen, Curator, Wallis Annenberg Photography Department, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); and Paul Martineau, Associate Curator, Department of Photographs, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Closing Artist Keynote speaker: Catherine Opie, artist

Oral History Reception Hosted by Sarah Douglas, Editor in Chief, ARTnews:

Visitors are invited to share their stories of the 1990 Mapplethorpe exhibition, reflect on its impact, and comment on issues raised in the symposium. This commentary will be recorded and simultaneously broadcast during the symposium's final public reception at the 21c Museum Hotel.