



FotoFocus Announces 2022 Biennial Theme and First Artists and Curators



America's Largest Photography Biennial to Consider Human Impact on the Natural World and Feature Large-Scale, Site-Specific Commission by Artist Ian Strange, Solo Exhibitions by Baseera Khan, Tony Oursler, and Liz Roberts, and More

(Cincinnati, OH — April 14, 2021) — **FotoFocus** is pleased to announce that the theme for its sixth edition of the **FotoFocus Biennial** will be *World Record*. The 2022 Biennial will activate museums, galleries, universities, and public spaces throughout Greater Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, Dayton, and Columbus, Ohio, in **October 2022**, with a concentrated week of programming held **October 1–8, 2022**, and preview events on **September 30, 2022**.

The theme *World Record* considers film and photography's extensive record of life on earth, while exploring humankind's impact on the natural world and the choices—for ill or good—we now face as a global community.

Since its invention, photography has recorded plant varieties, animal species and behaviors, habitats, weather conditions, geologic upheavals, as well as the “other worlds” of moons, planets, stars, and galaxies. This mass documentation has fed knowledge, creating a scientific record that has enriched our understanding of life. But it has also contributed to the exploitation of natural resources and their increasing scarcity, lending data to rampant industrial development that threatens the very resources it is based on.

World Record also refers to records, as in breaking records. World records have traditionally been thought of positively as records of quantifiable human achievement, but records have come to be associated increasingly with the extremes of the natural world, such as the hottest year on record, record numbers of animal extinctions, record levels of air pollution, record numbers of hurricanes per season, or rising sea levels, all a direct response to human impact on the planet.

FotoFocus invites venues in Greater Cincinnati and the surrounding region to apply to the 2022 Biennial, and welcomes proposals addressing the theme on a range of topics, including nature and science; exploration; space travel and outer space; climate change and its impact on societies; social lives of human beings within various environments, cultural as well as natural; forms of energy, past and present; the cultivation of natural resources, mineral and animal; and utopian and dystopian visions of man in nature.

VENUES CAN APPLY HERE

Deadline: Friday, September 17, 2021

This next edition of the Biennial follows the reconfiguration of the 2020 Biennial, which was presented in an atypical format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In April 2020, FotoFocus pledged \$800,000 of its Biennial budget to financially support the Greater Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, Dayton and Columbus, Ohio art communities.

The 2022 Biennial will feature new commissions by artists working internationally and in the Greater Cincinnati region, in addition to new exhibitions and film programming curated by the FotoFocus team and FotoFocus guest curators. The first announced commissions and exhibitions are listed below. Additional information and programming will be released over the coming year.

FOTOFOCUS CURATORS:

- Kevin Moore, Artistic Director and Curator
- Carissa Barnard, Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Programming
- C. Jacqueline Wood, Film Curator

FOTOFOCUS GUEST CURATORS:

- Amara Antilla, Senior Curator at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, OH
- Ylinka Barotto, Associate Curator at the Moody Center for the Arts, Rice University, Houston, TX
- Makeda Best, Richard L. Menschel Curator of Photography at the Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA
- Matt Distel, Exhibitions Director for The Carnegie, Covington, KY
- Ariel Goldberg, Writer and Independent Curator, New York, NY
- Tony Oursler, Multimedia Artist, New York, NY

FOTOFOCUS CURATED PROJECTS:

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- An exhibition by New York-based artist **Baseera Khan** at the **Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati**, co-curated by **Amara Antilla** (Senior Curator at the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati) and **Ylinka Barotto** (Associate Curator at the Moody Center for the Arts, Rice University). In their work, Khan sublimates colonial histories through performance and sculpture in order to map geographies of the future.
- A show by New York-based artist **Tony Oursler**, co-curated by the artist and **Kevin Moore** (FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator). Oursler's work, always rooted in the media of painting and film, hearkens back to the media's past while looking forward to the fully networked, digitally assisted future of image and identity production.



- A large-scale, public, site-specific artwork by Australian transdisciplinary artist **Ian Strange**, curated by **Kevin Moore** (FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator). Strange explores architecture, space, and the home in his work.
- A multi-site, experiential public video installation by artist **Liz Roberts**, curated by **Carissa Barnard** (FotoFocus Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Programming). Roberts uses moving image and sound to recreate the cinematic experience of the open road—revealing a collective fear and false sense of security along the journey.

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- *On the Line*, a group exhibition at the **Contemporary Arts Center** co-curated by **Makeda Best** (Richard L. Menschel Curator of Photography at the Harvard Art Museums) and **Kevin Moore** (FotoFocus Artistic Director and Curator). Focusing on performance and climate, the exhibition comprises a diverse group of artists centered geographically in the Americas.
- *Images on which to build*, a group show at the **Contemporary Arts Center** curated by writer and independent curator **Ariel Goldberg**, presents a range of photographic practices, from slideshows to archiving, to understand spaces for learning within LGBTQ and feminist grassroots activism of the 1970-1990s.
- A special collaborative project curated by **Matt Distel** (Exhibitions Director for The Carnegie, Covington, KY). A Cincinnati native, Distel will develop an exhibition at The Carnegie focused on artists from the region, in collaboration with outside partners.

ABOUT FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus is a Cincinnati-based nonprofit arts organization that champions photography and lens-based art through exhibitions and public programming. Since 2010, the organization has engaged art and educational institutions throughout the region to support and expand the cultural dialogue around the medium that has come to define our time. With an emphasis on intellectually and academically rigorous programs, the organization provides uniquely enriching access to lens-based art, film, and practices inspired by photography. FotoFocus has collaborated with organizations, curators, academics, and more than 1600 artists and participants, to present over 750 exhibitions and programs.

FotoFocus has awarded over 500 grants to support partners presenting projects and educational programs that are accessible and engaging to the public. In April 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, FotoFocus pledged part of its 2020 Biennial budget to financially support more than 100 Participating Venues and Partners in the region's art community through FotoFocus Emergency Art Grants.

Signature FotoFocus programming includes: **FotoFocus Biennial**, which had a record-breaking 207,000 visitors in 2018 and has presented exhibitions of work by both historic and contemporary artists such as Berenice Abbott, Eugène Atget, Roe Ethridge, Zanele Muholi, Karl Blossfeldt, Francis Bruguière, Thomas Ruff, and Akram Zaatari in Cincinnati; the **FotoFocus Symposium**, which has contributed significant dialogue and insight to culturally relevant topics including the controversial Mapplethorpe exhibition; the **FotoFocus Lecture and Visiting Artist Series**, which has brought internationally renowned artists, such as Zoe Leonard



and William Wegman, to Cincinnati; and the **FotoFocus Film Program**, created to enrich the region's cinematic landscape.

CONNECT

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