

The Renaissance Society at The University of Chicago

Annual Report 2013-2014

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Report of the Board President

Jorge Cauz

This season marked the Society's 99th, and what a tremendous year it was. The organization continued its commitment to presenting art that engages with key questions of our times, to supporting ambitious artistic experimentation, and to providing a rich, interdisciplinary context for discovering and discussing contemporary art.

I would like to sincerely thank this year's exhibition and program sponsors: For *Suicide Narcissus*: Arts & Science Initiative, The Franke Institute for the Humanities, RBC Wealth Management, Nicholson Center for British Studies, The Center for Latin American Studies, The Cliff Dwellers Arts Foundation and Poem Present. For *Nora Schultz: parrottree--building for bigger than real*: National Endowment for the Arts, Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Harpo Foundation and John Morace and Tom Kennedy. These ambitious projects would not have been possible without your support.

I am equally grateful to the many government, corporate and foundation funders who give unrestricted annual contributions that provide the critical foundation for our operations: Alphawood Foundation, the CityArts Program of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, a municipal agency; Christie's; Efroymson Family Fund; The Kenneth and Anne Griffin Foundation; John R. Halligan Charitable Fund; the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; Robert Lehman Foundation; The MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince Charitable Trust; Chauncey and Marion D. McCormick Family Foundation; Nuveen Investments; the Provost's Discretionary Fund at the University of Chicago; Pritzker Foundation; the Pritzker Traubert Family Foundation; and The Siragusa Foundation.

This year we were also thrilled to welcome new members to our International Committee, a group who serves as the organization's strongest outside supporters and ambassadors: Harry Blain, Espen Galteng Dosvig, and Cecile Benedict Fearnley.

Last but not least, I am deeply appreciative to the many, many individuals who support the organization in myriad ways throughout the year.

The Renaissance Society annual benefit and auction was held on September 7, 2013. Randy Kroszner and David Nelson graciously embraced the challenge of chairing the event, providing unwavering leadership as we welcomed new Executive Director and Chief Curator, Solveig Øvstebø, with the theme of "Sojourn" to mark her journey to Chicago. I extend our deepest gratitude to lead corporate sponsor Kirkland & Ellis LLP/ Linda Warren and Jeffrey C. Hammes, and to benefactors Larry Richman/The Private Bank and Helen Zell. We would like to acknowledge the many artists and galleries from around the world who so generously donated their works for the auction, which raised nearly \$420,000 to support the organization's exhibitions and programs.

I also thank my fellow Trustees for your generosity and leadership. I am delighted to introduce and welcome new board members Charles Harper, Anne Van Wart, and Richard Wright. Changes in roles included Martin Friedman assuming the role of Vice President and my appointment as President. We are grateful to departing members Curt

Conklin, Timothy Flood, Heinrich Jaeger, Joseph Tabet, and Andreas Waldburg-Wolfegg for their service to the board, and we wish them a fond farewell.

My admiration and gratitude are extended to the entire Renaissance Society staff, led fearlessly by Solveig: Rob Bain, Erin Fowler, Anna Searle Jones, Maria Lubliner, Karen Reimer, Yuri Stone, and Hamza Walker. I would also like to thank departing members of staff Lori Bartman, former Director of Development, and Lise Haberman, former Office Manager, for their many years of service. The dedication and talent of our staff is essential to the organization's success.

Thank you all, and I look forward to sharing our upcoming Centennial.

June 25, 2014





Annual Report 2013-14

The Renaissance Society's 99th season was one of transition for the Renaissance Society as it nears the end of its first century. Solveig Øvstebø took over leadership of the institution as Executive Director and Chief Curator in June 2013, bringing with her a redoubled commitment to supporting artists in the creation of new works and to providing a rigorous intellectual framework around them. This year's activity across exhibition, education, and publishing exemplifies the bold, sustained inquiry for which the Renaissance Society has been known over the last century, and with which it looks forward to the next.

Exhibitions

The 2013-14 season kicked off with a group exhibition, *Suicide Narcissus*, curated by Hamza Walker and featuring artists Thomas Baumann, Haris Epaminonda & Daniel Gustav Cramer, Katie Paterson, Nicole Six & Paul Petrisch, Lucy Skaer, and Daniel Steegmann Mangrane. Described as a "contemporary vanitas," the show juxtaposed culture and our quest for knowledge with reflections on folly, catastrophe, and death.

Nora Schultz's parrottree--building for bigger than real marked Solveig Øvstebø's first curated exhibition at the Renaissance Society. For her first solo museum exhibition in the United States, Schultz manipulated found objects into a site-specific installation in which elements stood, hung, and layered on one another. In doing so, the artist freed these "things" by disassociation, removing them from their context so they could become forms, colors, lines, themselves.

Teen Paranormal Romance, a group exhibition curated by Hamza Walker, examined contemporary artists' use of the paranormal vis-à-vis its rising prevalence in popular culture. Artists featured include Kathryn Andrews, Ed Atkins, Chris Bradley, Roe Ethridge, Guyton\Walker, Anna K.E., Jack Lavender, and Anna Gray & Ryan Wilson Paulsen.

Christina Mackie's *Colour drop* saw the artist using color to visualize intention, as both conceptual tool and ancient human device. Co-curated by Solveig Øvstebø and Hamza Walker, the exhibition's large-scale nets and glass and ceramic works began a line of inquiry in Mackie's practice that informed her 2015 Tate Britain Commission.

Education/Events

This season was rich in events that complemented and expanded upon themes in the exhibition program. Selected by Director of Education and Associate Curator, Hamza Walker, these concerts, readings, and talks also offered engagement with contemporary creative practices outside of, but related to, the visual arts.

The program provided opportunities to connect with University of Chicago faculty members whose scholarship intersects with questions raised by the exhibitions. Joseph Masco, Professor of Anthropology, presented a talk titled "The Six Extinctions" in conjunction with Suicide Narcissus; Lisa Lee, Harper Fellow and Assistant Professor of Art History, led a

walk-through of Nora Schultz's exhibition; and Michael Rossi, Assistant Professor of the History of Medicine, offered an introduction to Christina Mackie's exhibition based on his research into the physiology, psychology, and physics of color.

The Black Is, Black Ain't symposium in December 2013 offered an opportunity to revisit the discourse around shifts in the rhetoric of race that was prompted by the 2008 exhibition of the same title curated by Hamza Walker. It particularly reflected on a series of seminal exhibitions and the contexts in which they were mounted, from the Rodney King riots to Obama's presidential election. Panelists included Huey Copeland, Thelma Golden, Kellie Jones, Bennett Simpson, and Hamza Walker.

Publications

The *Black Is, Black Ain't* catalogue is a substantial hardcover book featuring essays by Huey Copeland, Darby English, Greg Foster-Rice, Amy M. Mooney, Kymberly N. Pinder, Krista Thompson, Hamza Walker, and Kenneth Warrren. With full-color documentation of the 2008 exhibition, it was launched as part of the symposium described above.

The release of Nora Schultz's *Parrottree* coincided with a performance event to mark the closing of the exhibition in late February 2013. An ambitious hybrid between exhibition catalogue and artist's book, it features photo documentation of the Renaissance Society installation, an essay by the curator Solveig Øvstebø, and *The Parrot Magazine* by Nora Schultz, a 64-page magazine "made by parrots for parrots and for all birds that need to integrate into human society under aggravated circumstances." Additionally, experimental writing pieces by Keren Cytter and Seth Price, and a visual art project by John Kelsey were all commissioned specifically for this book.





Exhibition Events

Suicide Narcissus

Nora Schultz: parrottree-building for bigger than real

OPENING RECEPTION September 15, 2013

ARTIST TALK Paul Petrisch and Lucy Skaer November 23, 2013

LECTURE The Six Extinctions Joe Masco November 24, 2013

READING Cyrus Console, poet December 2, 2013 OPENING RECEPTION with ARTIST TALK January 12, 2014

GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Hamza Walker January 18, 2014

GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Hamza Walker January 29, 2014

GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Lisa Lee February 16, 2014

PERFORMANCE AND BOOK RELEASE Performance by Nora Schultz and release of her exhibition catalogue February 23, 2014



Nora Schultz performance

Teen Paranormal Romance

Christina Mackie: Colour drop

OPENING RECEPTION with ARTIST TALK March 9, 2014

OPENING RECEPTION with ARTIST TALK March 9, 2014

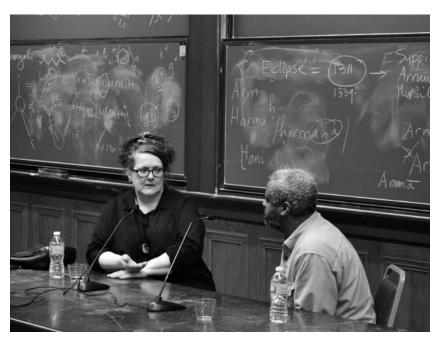
GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Hamza Walker March 12, 2014

GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Hamza Walker May 8, 2014

PANEL DISCUSSION
Philosophy and Popular Culture
with Blackwell Press
Panelists George A. Dunn and Rebecca
Housel, and Moderator Hamza Walker
March 16, 2014

GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Michael Rossi May 18, 2014

GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Hamza Walker April 5, 2014 GALLERY WALK-THROUGH Hamza Walker June 1, 2014



Christina Mackie and Hamza Walker

Other Events

CONCERT

Birgit Ulher (trumpet) and Eric Leonardson (electronics and assorted devices)
October 9, 2013

CONCERT

Lisa Goethe (flute) November 10, 2013

CONCERT

Yumiko Tanaka and Yoko Reikano Kimura (shamisen) November 13, 2013

SYMPOSIUM and BOOK RELEASE

Black Is, Black Ain't
Panelists Thelma Golden, Kellie Jones,
Bennett Simpson, Hamza Walker, and
Moderator Huey Copeland
Release of Black is, Black Ain't exhibition
catalogue
Dec. 8, 2013

READING

Dorothea Lasky, poet January 16, 2014

CONCERT

Marcus Weiss (saxophone) February 20, 2014

CONCERT

Charlemagne Palestine (composer, organ) March 17, 2014

CONCERT

Oren Ambarchi (composer, electronics, electric guitar) April 5, 2014







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September 15 - December 15, 2013

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Nora Schultz: parrottree--building for bigger than real

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Teen Paranormal Romance

March 9 - April 13, 2014

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Christina Mackie: Colour drop

April 27 - June 29, 2014

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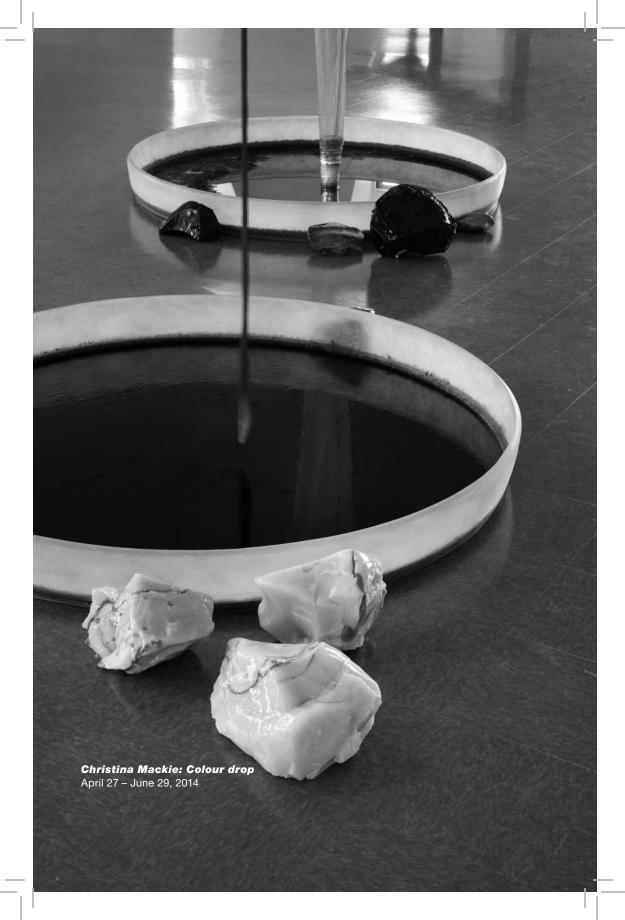
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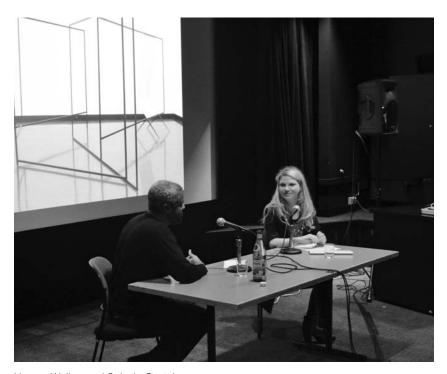
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Left

Nora Schultz: parrottree--building for bigger than real January 12 - February 23, 2014

Financial Statements

THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION JUNE 30, 2014 AND 2013

Assets	2014	2013
A33613		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 32,707	\$ 79,048
Pledges and accounts receivable	16,707	20,495
Grants receivable – current portion	184,500	126,500
Investments, at fair value	4,872,990	4,249,465
Inventory	81,357 44,934	101,461 58,028
Prepaid expenses and other current assets		
Total current assets	5,233,195	4,634,997
Property and equipment		
Office equipment	121,348	121,348
Less: accumulated depreciation	(116,810)	(112,143)
Total property and equipment	4,538	9,205
Other assets		
Grants receivable – noncurrent portion	30,000	105,000
Total assets	\$ 5,267,733	\$ 4,749,202
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 28,308	\$ 38,520
Deferred revenue	39,073	57,500
Total current liabilities	67,381	96,020
Net assets		
Unrestricted	5,045,352	4,454,682
Temporarily restricted	155,000	198,500
Total net assets	5,200,352	4,653,182
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 5,267,733	\$ 4,749,202

Financial Statements

THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2014

	2014						
			Temporarily				
	Unrestricted		Restricted		Total		
Revenues							
Grants	\$	252,603	\$	50,000	\$	302,603	
Contributions		249,160		-		249,160	
In-kind contributions		30,000		-		30,000	
Benefit revenues, net of							
\$120,375 in expenses		330,612	-			330,612	
Editions		166,608		=		166,608	
Exhibit touring fees		20,148		-		20,148	
Publications		30,820		-		30,820	
Interest and dividend income		87,745		-		87,745	
Other income		=		-		-	
Net gain on investments		661,974		-		661,974	
Net assets released							
from restriction		93,500		(93,500)			
Total revenues		1,923,170		(43,500)		1,879,670	
Expenses							
Program services		921,738		_		921,738	
Management and general		238,847		=		238,847	
Fundraising		171,915		-		171,915	
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Total expenses		1,332,500				1,332,500	
Change in net assets		590,670		(43,500)		547,170	
Net assets, beginning of year		4,454,682		198,500		4,653,182	
Net assets, end of year	\$:	5,045,352	\$	155,000		5,200,352	



Teen Paranormal Romance March 09 – April 13, 2014

The Renaissance Society at The University of Chicago

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Cover: **Nora Schultz: parrottree--building for bigger than real**, installation view, 2013 All installation photos by Tom Van Eynde