

## Evelyn Rydz: Floating Artifacts

January 24 to May 21, 2017



Evelyn Rydz, *Floating Artifact #8*, 2014 to present. Pigmented Ink print. Courtesy of the artist and Miller Yezerski Gallery

MEDFORD, MA - The Tufts University Art Gallery and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts proudly present *Evelyn Rydz: Floating Artifacts*, a component of the exhibition *The Ocean After Nature* on view at SMFA at Tufts. *Floating Artifacts* examines the life cycles of ocean debris – from ancient organisms, to fossil fuel at the base of the ocean, to quickly manufactured plastic toys and tools on land, and back to the ocean as floating fragments of our contemporary lives.

*The Ocean After Nature* examines how the seascape is shaped in an era when human beings have become the driving force in the development of the planet. *Floating Artifacts*, specially presented within the Tisch Gallery as a component of *The Ocean After Nature*, is an ongoing project mapping coastlines through the residues of our contemporary lives. Exploring perceptions of scale, the washed ashore debris is magnified to examine everyday actions and lasting impacts, fleeting and geologic time, unstable and fixed conditions. Focused on the narratives these found objects have gathered on their journeys, Rydz explores the interconnected histories and possible futures of these misplaced objects and ocean currents around the globe. The project aims to share multiple perspectives, from individual coastlines to global currents and the cumulative human actions that link them and us together.

*Floating Artifacts* includes a collection of microscopic samples Rydz has gathered in her artistic research. Viewers are invited to interact with these samples and to categorize them according to an observational system devised by the artist. These microscopic samples visually contrast Rydz's large scale installation of over a hundred and fifty portrait-sized photographs. In creating a gallery environment filled with speculation and dialogue, Rydz encourages active contemplation about the material properties of these samples in relation to our ideas about oceans, time, and the production of everyday objects.

Evelyn Rydz (b. 1979, Miami) received an MFA from School of the Museum of Fine Arts in affiliation with Tufts University and a BFA from Florida State University. She was the recipient of the prestigious SMFA Traveling Fellowship, which enabled a research trip to Kamilo Point, Hawaii, resulting in the solo exhibition *Evelyn Rydz: Forever Yours* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 2014. Her recent and upcoming exhibitions include *Plastic Entanglements* at the Palmer Art Museum, Penn State University (2017); *GYRE*, a Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition at the Anchorage Museum, Alaska, USC Fisher Museum, Los Angeles, and the David J. Sencer CDC Museum, Atlanta; the Foster Prize Exhibition at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; the DeCordova Annual at the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Lincoln, MA; *To Extremes: Public Art in a Changing World* at Maseeh Hall, MIT, Cambridge, MA; Berliner Liste, Berlin, Germany; Julie Saul Gallery, NY; *Drawing Itself* at Brattleboro Museum, Vermont; El Parque Cultural del Caribe, Barranquilla, Colombia; Tufts University Art Gallery, Medford, MA; Joshua Liner Gallery, New York, NY; Miller Yezerski Gallery, Boston, MA; and La Otra: Feria de Arte Contemporáneo, Bogotá, Colombia.

Rydz is the recipient of a Massachusetts Cultural Council Drawing Fellowship, a SMFA Traveling Fellowship, and a Bruce Dayton Faculty Fellowship. Rydz has led community art projects at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami. Her work is included in the collections of the Federal Reserve Bank, Fitchburg Art Museum, Fidelity Investments, and the Decordova Museum among others. She is currently an Associate Professor at Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

*The Ocean After Nature* is an exhibition curated by Alaina Claire Feldman and organized by Independent Curators International (ICI), New York. The exhibition is made possible with the generous support from ICI's International Forum and Board of Trustees. The presentation of *Evelyn Rydz: Floating Artifacts* at Tufts University Art Gallery has been organized in collaboration with Carol Stakenas, Guest Curator.



Evelyn Rydz, *Floating Artifact #12*, 2014 to present. Pigmented Ink print. Courtesy of the artist and Miller Yezerksi Gallery

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## *The Directed Looking Gallery*

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The Directed Looking Gallery is dedicated to innovative teaching and experiential learning. The space fosters the observation of art objects for the purposes of education and research.

Inquiry is at the heart of any educational gallery. What questions does an object provoke? How do people know what they know about objects? What visual evidence can you find to support your ideas?

Learning through art is not just about posing and answering questions. Learning through art requires one to slow down in order to really see. The type of slow looking promoted in this gallery requires patience and practice.

Some of the oldest objects in this gallery date from Ancient Greece and have been intentionally juxtaposed with modern artworks. This variety is intended to be both an invitation and a provocation. As you observe seemingly disparate objects placed in close proximity, consider why they are shown together—is it material, time, technique? For example, there are many ways artists use carving in this exhibition. Think about the choices involved in creating or making something in a subtractive way. How must one's vision change to accomplish this?

Let the enjoyment of wandering through the Directed Looking Gallery prompt creative reflection on your own work. Wonder about patterns, similarities and differences. While you do this, you are unconsciously honing pattern recognition skills used in many professions. Doctors and scientists employ such skills in clinical work, and sociologists and statisticians use them to analyze data sets. Think about what objects are significant to your discipline, or tell a story relevant to you.

Students of all ages can benefit from sustained engagement with art. The Directed Looking Gallery aims to provide an educational experience that enhances student work inside and outside of the classroom. Ultimately, through visual literacy, the Gallery enhances critical thinking skills that are transferable to any area of life.

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