



# PARRISH ART MUSEUM

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**PARRISH ART MUSEUM PRESENTS *RADICAL SEAFARING*—A SURVEY OF  
ARTIST-INITIATED, SITE-SPECIFIC WORKS ON THE WATER**

***On View May 8–July 24, 2016, the Exhibition Features Seafaring Projects by  
Contemporary Artists***



Swoon's handmade raft, *Old Hickory*, 2009, will be installed in the Museum. Photo: Tod Seelie

**WATER MILL, NY 1/6/2015**—The Parrish Art Museum presents *Radical Seafaring*, the first museum survey of artists' site-specific projects on the water, including journeys, actions, experiments and performances by artists from the United States, Brazil, France, Japan, the Netherlands, and Mexico. On view from May 8–July 24, 2016, the multidisciplinary exhibition, publication, and program initiative features twenty-five artists or collectives with works that range from artist-made vessels, to documentation of creative expeditions, to speculative designs for alternative communities at sea.

"The increasing number of works created on the water by contemporary artists is approaching the critical mass of a movement like Land Art," said exhibition organizer Andrea Grover, Century Arts Foundation

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Curator of Special Projects at the Parrish. “The ‘offshore art’ projects in *Radical Seafaring* represent a new form of expression that is especially powerful and timely as climatologists anticipate the effects of rising sea levels, changes in weather patterns, and the impact on coastal zones—especially when one considers that half the world’s population live within 200 miles of a sea coast.”

*Radical Seafaring* connects what Grover has termed “offshore art” with Land, Performance, and Conceptual Art of the 1960s and ‘70s, a period when many artists moved the creative process outside of the studio and exhibited their work in natural and urban environments apart from traditional venues. The contemporary artists in *Radical Seafaring* continue the interdisciplinary and site-specific practices that began with pioneering artists of that era such as Bas Jan Ader, Dennis Oppenheim, and Robert Smithson—all of whom are represented in the exhibition. By narrowing this vast area of inquiry to projects on the water, *Radical Seafaring* provides focus and clarity to widespread creative strategies that embrace the world outside.

The tremendous variety, scope, and scale of the projects in *Radical Seafaring* lend themselves to wide-ranging representation through diverse media including models, videos, audio recordings, and photographs that document performative and monumentally scaled projects; as well as sculptures, drawings, prints, artifacts, and installations. Among the works on view will be Swoon’s handmade raft, *Old Hickory*, 2009, Mark Dion’s *Cabinet of Marine Debris*, 2013, Bas Jan Ader’s installation, *In Search of the Miraculous*, 1975, Simon Starling’s large format projection, *Autoxylopyrocycloboros*, 2006, and detailed models by Buckminster Fuller (*Triton City Model*, 1980), Pedro Reyes (*Floating Pyramid*, 2004), and Cesar Harada (*Protei 010.9 Mini Cargo*, 2014). An off-site project, Mary Mattingly’s houseboat, *WetLand*, 2014, will be docked locally for use in programs and workshops.

The exhibition, featuring projects dating from 1968 to 2016, is organized by four themes—**Exploration**: the quest for new experiences; **Liberation**: self-reliance, the desire to shape one’s world, and Utopian impulses; **Fieldwork**: hands-on, methodological information-gathering about the environment; and **Speculation**: using waterways as the stage upon which to build other realities.

**Exploration** features an installation based on Ader’s mythic and influential performance triptych, *In Search of the Miraculous*, which involved the artist’s attempted solo North Atlantic voyage in a small sailboat. A concert by a chamber choir singing sea shanties in Ader’s Los Angeles studio is presented in the exhibition by an 80-slide projection and audio recording. Contemporary examples of **Exploration** include *Raft of the Medusa*, 2004, a photograph of an interpreted reenactment of Théodore Géricault’s 1818–1819 Romantic period painting by the art collective Bruce High Quality Foundation (BHQF). Shinnecock Indian Nation member Courtney M. Leonard, who was among a small group of artists, scientists, and educators who recently traveled to historic East Coast ports aboard the last wooden whaling ship, the *Charles W. Morgan*, expresses her historical ties to water and whaling in *Breach #2*—a pyramid of clay vessels shaped like oversize teeth of a sperm whale.

**Liberation** comprises artists’ performances, experiments, and journeys that take the form of actions related to use of the world’s waterways. Photographs in the exhibition document Atelier Van Lieshout’s *A-portable*, 2001, a mobile clinic created for the Dutch nonprofit organization Women on Waves to provide reproductive healthcare just off the coasts of countries where abortion is banned; and Vik Muniz’s *Lampedusa*, 2015, a vessel crafted to resemble an origami newspaper boat, with blazing headlines about hundreds of migrants who died in a Mediterranean shipwreck. Muniz launched the vessel on the Adriatic during the 2015 Venice Biennale as an elegy to those who had died.

**Fieldwork** features artists' laboratories, studios at sea, and excursions aimed at observation and data collection. For his pen and ink drawings, *Forbidden Islands*, 2015, Scott Bluedorn visited private and government-owned East Coast islands to record rarely seen landscapes. In 2013, Mark Dion traveled to the Alaskan Coast to examine the buildup of trash expelled from the Great Pacific gyres on a voyage with artists, educators, and scientists. Dion's *Cabinet of Marine Debris* displays consumer products and plastic containers discarded in the ocean. As an experiment in living sustainably and nomadically, Mary Mattingly builds domestic spaces on the water such as *WetLand*, a modified 1971 Rockwell Whitcraft houseboat that produces its own food and energy through farming, rainwater collection, and other onboard systems.

Within the theme of **Speculation**, which brings together all of the thematic areas of *Radical Seafaring*, several artists address the impact of humankind on the planet with the concept of floating cities, depicted by Fuller's *Triton City Model*, a waterborne village that houses 100,000 residents; and Harada's *Open\_Sailing*, a technologically advanced ocean-dwelling community.

Participating artists in **Radical Seafaring** are: Bas Jan Ader, Ant Farm, Atelier Van Lieshout, Scott Bluedorn, George Brecht, Bruce High Quality Foundation, Chris Burden, The Center for Land Use Interpretation, Steve Badgett and Chris Taylor, Michael Combs, R. Buckminster Fuller, Cesar Harada, Constance Hockaday, Courtney M. Leonard, Mare Liberum, Marie Lorenz, Mary Mattingly, Vik Muniz, Dennis Oppenheim, The PLAY, Pedro Reyes, Duke Riley, Robert Smithson, Simon Starling, and Swoon.

The exhibition includes the fully illustrated, 160-page catalogue, *Radical Seafaring*, by Andrea Grover, with a preface and acknowledgments by Parrish Art Museum Director Terrie Sultan; essays by Sasha Archibald, Alexander Dumbadze, Dylan Gauthier, and Andrea Grover; and artist project pages by Christopher French. Published by the Parrish Art Museum and distributed by Prestel Verlag, it will be available in May, 2016.

The *Radical Seafaring* exhibition and catalogue are made possible by an Emily Hall Tremain Exhibition Award. Generous support has also been provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, an Art Dealers Association of America (ADAA) Foundation Curatorial Award and the Association of Art Museum Curators, The European Fine Art Fair Maastricht, John and Anne Mullen, and David and Jane Walentas. Additional support for the catalogue was provided by the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation.



### About the Parrish Art Museum

Inspired by the natural setting and artistic life of Long Island's East End, the Parrish Art Museum illuminates the creative process and how art and artists transform our experiences and understanding of the world and how we live in it. The Museum fosters connections among individuals, art, and artists through care and interpretation of the collection, presentation of exhibitions, publications, educational initiatives, programs, and artists-in residence. The Parrish is a center for cultural engagement, an inspiration and destination for the region, the nation, and the world.