

# aspenartmuseum



Mungo Thomson, conceptual rendering for 2012 AAM Fourth of July parade float, *Levitating Mass*.  
Image courtesy of the artist.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**ASPEN ART MUSEUM ANNUAL FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION TO  
FEATURE BALLOON FLOAT, *LEVITATING MASS*, BY LOS ANGELES-  
BASED GUEST ARTIST MUNGO THOMSON; ARTIST'S WORK A PLAYFUL  
TAKE ON MICHAEL HEIZER'S MONUMENTAL LACMA INSTALLATION**

**ASPEN, COLORADO** — On Wednesday, July 4, 2012, during the annual City of Aspen Fourth of July Parade, the Aspen Art Museum unveils its 2012 float entry created by Los Angeles-based guest artist, Mungo Thomson. It is the seventh summer in a row that the AAM has partnered with a contemporary artist to create an artwork for Aspen's Fourth of July celebration. Past participants range from composer Nico Muhly; to visual artists Dave McKenzie, Harrell Fletcher, Nicolau Vergueiro, Nathan Mabry, and Katy Grinnan; to the New York-based architectural firm WORKac.

Known for his conceptually driven and playful artwork, Thomson is creating a commercially produced helium balloon resembling a massive boulder titled *Levitating Mass*, that will be paraded through the streets by members of Museum staff during the annual celebration. The float is based on artist Michael Heizer's much-noted new installation at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), *Levitated Mass* (2012), whose 340-ton boulder centerpiece was recently transported 105 miles from a rock

quarry to LACMA on an 11-day journey that generated both international attention and spontaneous local celebrations along the way. Thomson's *Levitating Mass* riffs on Heizer's boulder, its journey and exhibition — the latter invites audience members to stroll beneath it post-installation on the LACMA grounds. In turn, Thomson's version ends its journey at the AAM, where it will remain on view for guests to enjoy throughout the summer.

Like all of Thomson's work, *Levitating Mass* pairs his ongoing explorations of perceptions of mass culture, context, and reception, as well as his preoccupations with gravity and scale (Thomson's float is approximately half the size of Heizer's rock), while also posing questions about nature, art, and spectacle.

Following the parade, the AAM hosts its annual Old-Fashioned 4th of July Picnic at 1:30 p.m., on the Museum grounds. In addition to free food, entertainment, an on-site family art activity with AAM educators, and the opportunity to view current AAM exhibitions *The Residue of Memory* and *Simon Denny: Full Participation*, 2012's free festivities feature a barbecue lunch provided by Aspen's Hickory House, with beer provided by New Belgium Brewing Company and entertainment provided by local musicians and sponsored by KSNO radio.

Throughout the summer, the Aspen Art Museum moves forward with initial construction on a new Shigeru Ban-designed AAM facility in the town core, and with its striking ArtCrush summer benefit August 1-3, featuring the presentation of the Aspen Award for Art to 2012 artist honoree Tom Sachs.

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**Mungo Thomson** has had solo exhibitions at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; The Kadist Art Foundation, Paris; and GAMeC, Bergamo, Italy, among others. Recent group exhibitions include *Pacific Standard Time: The Ball of Artists* (2012) and *Untitled (12th Istanbul Biennial)* (2011). Thomson will have a solo exhibition at SITE Santa Fe in early 2013. His AAM Fourth of July project is organized by the Aspen Art Museum with support from Alison and Mark Pincus.

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**AAM MUSEUM HOURS:**

Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.; Thursdays 10:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 6:00 p.m.; closed Mondays and major holidays

**AAM ADMISSION IS FREE** courtesy of John and Amy Phelan

Visit the AAM online: [www.aspenartmuseum.org](http://www.aspenartmuseum.org)

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