

Wexner Center for the Arts
Ohio State University

Gray Matters

May 5 - July 30, 2017

"Dizzying and thrilling, demonstrating the complexity of female consciousness."
—Sarah Rose Sharp, *Delicious Line*

This spring, see the vibrant world between black and white. Join us for *Gray Matters*, a multifaceted survey of 37 contemporary women artists who have explored the practice of *grisaille*—the French term for working in shades of gray. Ranging from emerging to well-established, these artists challenge an all-too-simplistic notion of colorless "neutrality" as they reveal the variegated spectrum of black, white, gray, and everything in between.

In uniting over 50 remarkable works across media, *Gray Matters* provides a clarifying, focused lens through which to see the world afresh. You'll encounter **Roni Horn's** *Opposites of White* (2006/15), substantial glass sculptures that appear as pools of water—at once transparent and reflective, both mirrors and lenses. An artist typically associated with vividly colorful portraits of black women, **Mickalene Thomas** narrows her palette for *Hair Portrait #20* (2014)—without relinquishing her celebratory use of rhinestones. The immense, sculptural graphite drawings of **Nancy Rubins** radiate the abundant energy expended in their making while begging reconsideration of the pencil's power. Featuring her signature veils of ink, **Marlene Dumas's** *Betrayal* (1994) offers blurred, indeterminate portraits of women: a meditation on sameness and difference, and on how time affects one's worldview. **Julie Mehretu's** six-panel print *Epigraph, Damascus* (2016) constructs what she has described as “story maps of dislocation,” here providing a portrait of the war-torn Syrian city. **Mary Reid Kelley's** arresting, award-winning video *This is Offal* (2015–16) contemplates mortality and abandonment through a dialogue between a deceased woman and her organs. And the earliest work in the exhibition, **Vija Celmins's** 1964 painting *Heater*, sets the glowing red center of an electric space heater amid a field of deep grays—reminding us of the constant, ever-shifting dialogue between hot and cool, color and shadow. *Gray Matters* is the first exhibition organized by Michael Goodson since he assumed the role of Senior Curator of Exhibitions at the Wex, and the survey enriches a calendar year of programming in which every artist featured in our galleries is a woman.

Organized by the **Wexner Center for the Arts**.

Support for this exhibition is provided by **Mike and Paige Crane** and **Neil K. Rector**.

ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION

Tauba Auerbach • Carol Bove • Gisele Camargo • Vija Celmins • Bethany Collins • Marsha Cottrell • Tacita Dean • Tara Donovan • Marlene Dumas • Michelle Grabner • Josephine Halvorson • Mona Hatoum • Roni Horn • Cristina Iglesias • Jennie C. Jones • Toba Khedoori • Laura Lisbon • Suzanne McClelland • Julie Mehretu • Katie Paterson • Joyce Pensato • Amalia Pica • Mary Reid Kelley • Michal Rovner • Nancy Rubins • Arlene Shechet • Erin Shirreff • Amy Sillman • Xaviera Simmons • Diane Simpson • Lorna Simpson • Avery Singer • Michelle Stuart • Mickalene Thomas • Kara Walker • Rachel Whiteread • Carmen Winant