

EXHIBITION

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"Surrounding Interiors: Views Inside the Car" at the Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley College Opening February 21

Exhibition Features Contemporary Artists Visions Inspired by Car Interiors

Wellesley, Mass.—A place both personal and anonymous, private and public, hermetic and permeable, the interior of the car is the subject of "**Surrounding Interiors: Views Inside the Car,**" opening Thursday, February 21 at the Davis Museum and Cultural Center, on the campus of Wellesley College. The exhibition continues through June 9, 2001. An opening reception will be held on February 21 from 5 to 7pm. The exhibition and related events are free and open to the public. Opening day activities include an afternoon concert and artist's lecture at 12:30pm and 3:30pm respectively.

"Like the mind, the car interior is a control center of sorts, a center of psychic and social activity that frames a particular view of the world outside, occasionally offering the outsider glimpses within," notes Judith Hoos Fox, curator of the Davis Museum and Cultural Center (DMCC) and exhibition organizer. "Substantial portions and significant moments of our lives take place while we're inside cars."

The experience of being inside a car has not been the subject of an exhibition until now.

This exhibition features 24 works by 17 contemporary artists in photography, video, sculpture, painting and multi-media who explore the mutable nature of the car interior. Works by artists Andrew Bush, Nan Goldin and Alex Harris (photography); Sophie Calle and Cate Snook (video); Dan Devine, Edward and Nancy Reddin Kienholz, Theophilus Nii Anum Sowah, Andrea Zittel (sculpture); Blake Rayne and James Rosenquist (painting), and Peter Cain, Patrick Killoran, Lorna Simpson and Daniel Storto (multi-media) are included. Some of the works have been created from the artist's perspective of being inside the car, sharing space and experience with their subject; other artists act as voyeurs into this private but vulnerable interior. **Blake Rayne's** paintings *Autumn Drive Part I and II* convey the blank quality of the

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car interior while **Cate Snook's** video installations take the viewer to a territory that questions the boundaries between inner vision and outer reality.

Sculptor **Andrea Zittel's** *faux* vehicles, customized to their owner's specifications, resemble small trailers. Viewed in the living rooms of their owners these works encapsulate the feeling of personal sanctuary found in a car. The handbuilt coffins of Ghanaian sculptor **Theophilus Nii Anum Sowah** relate the association of the car with death. In Ghana handbuilt replicas of cars have become popular as coffins in a new tradition celebrating the deceased by burying them in cherished objects that are often automobiles.

Andrew Bush's photographs pierce the protective shield drivers and passengers feel experience as they drive, deep in reverie and unaware of being observed. He has created a video projection that will be premiered at the exhibition. **Sophie Calle** presents an unglamorized version of romance in her video *Double Blind*, made with ex-groom Greg Shephard documenting their trip across the U.S., complete with their wedding in a drive-through chapel.

The exhibition catalogue is produced by *2wice\Visual\Cultural\Document*, a semi-annual interdisciplinary arts journal published by the 2wice Arts Foundation.

J. Abbott Miller, editor and designer of *2wice*, is also the exhibition designer. *2wice* was named the 1998 Magazine of the Year and was awarded a Gold Medal from the Society of Publication Designers.

The contributors to the "Surrounding Interiors" catalogue offer individual perspectives on our connection to the automotive interior. The catalogue presents essays by DMCC Curators Judith H. Fox and Lucy Flint-Gohlke, Rock and Roll writer Greil Marcus, Film historian Paul Arthur, Author and automotive expert Phil Patton ("Control"), Essayist Tobi Tobias ("Glove Compartment"), Art editor David Frankel ("Engine"), Professor of Visual Studies and author Giuliana Bruno ("Driven."), Editor/Designer J. Abbott Miller and Photographer Andrew Bush ("Driver"), Writer, Producer and Cinematographer Adam Bartos ("Lincoln") and Writer and Editor James Wolcott ("Noir").

Related Programming to be scheduled. For an update, please visit our web site at www.wellesley.edu/DavisMuseum/davismenu.html.

Surrounding Interiors was exhibited earlier this year at The Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, Florida from October 5 to January 6, 2002. It will next travel to the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota from September 7, 2002 to January 3, 2003.

Museum Hours

The DMCC is open Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday from 11-5, Wednesday and Thursday from 11-8, and Sunday 1-5. The Museum closes at 5 on Wednesdays and Thursdays in January, June, July and August, during semester breaks. Admission and parking are free. Recorded information about DMCC exhibitions, events, and driving directions is available at 781-283-2051 or on our web site at: <http://www.wellesley.edu/DavisMuseum/davismenu.html>. For tour information, please call 781-283-3382. The Collins Café, adjacent to the Museum is open to the public for lunch weekdays and features a new menu daily.

The Museum welcomes visitors with disabilities. The Museum, Collins Café and Collins Cinema are wheelchair accessible. Wheelchairs (2) are available for use in the Museum without charge. Special needs may be accommodated by contacting the Director of Disability Services, Jim Wice at 781-283-2434 or at jwice@wellesley.edu.

Opening Activities

Thursday 21 February 2002

Concert

12:30 – 1:30pm Towne Gallery. *Car Songs: Exploring the automobile and auto travel as a theme in jazz and American popular music*. Paula Zeitlin, violin, Kris Adams, vocals, Doug Johnson, piano, Thompson Kneeland, bass, Take Toriyama, drums.

Artist's Talk

Alex Harris

3:30 – 5pm Collins Cinema

Alex Harris is a founding member of the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University where he is Professor of the Practice of Public Policy and Documentary Studies. The Museum of Modern Art, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and the J. Paul Getty Museum are among the museums that hold his work.

Reception

5 – 7pm, Museum Lobby. Wellesley College's WZLY will play favorite car songs.

Film Series, Organized by the Harvard Film Archive, Harvard University,
Thursday evenings at 7pm in Collins Cinema

28 February

Touch of Evil, directed by Orson Welles, US, 1958, 35mm, b/w, 105 min.

With Charlton Heston, Janet Leigh, Akim Tamiroff. Unrestored version

Considered one of Orson Welles' great movies, this south-of-the-border mystery stages a dialogue between vehicle and persona. In this film, the car's rounded rooflines and fenders evince biomorphic visual rhymes with a character's outfit, thus acting as an extension of the human body.

14 March

American Graffiti, directed by George Lucas, US, 1973, 35mm, color, 110 min.

With Richard Dreyfuss, Martin Sheen, Harrison Ford

George Lucas's celebration of California car culture and the last gasps of pre-Vietnam-era-innocence capture the locales and roadside rituals of a mobile America.

28 March

Detour, directed by Edgar G. Ulmer, US, 1945, 35mm, b/w, 68 min.

With Tom Neale, Ann Savage, Claudia Drake

While hitchhiking a piano player meets a scheming femme fatale and is innocently involved in sudden death. "No matter what you do, no matter where you turn, fate sticks out its foot to trip you," bemoans *Detour's* Al Roberts (Tom Neal) in a film whose strangely compelling appeal involves an uncanny yet somehow very American admixture of passion and folly.

4 April

The Getaway, directed by Sam Peckinpah, US, 1972, 35mm, color, 122 min.

With Steve McQueen, Ali MacGraw (Wellesley College Class of 1960), Ben Johnson After a Texas bank heist, a gangster couple on the run is violently driven away from one another. The car is not only a tool of escape but is also a vehicle to reflect on the state of a "moving" story--the amorous relationship between then heart throbs, Steve and Ali.

18 April

Contempt (Le Mépris), directed by Jean-Luc Godard, France/Italy, 1963, 35mm, color, 103 min.

With Brigitte Bardot, Michel Piccoli, Jack Palance, Fritz Lang

French with English subtitles

Godard's early masterpiece focuses on the emotional journey of a scriptwriter (Piccoli) who is conscripted to craft an adaptation of Homer's *Odyssey* and finds himself caught between the film's earnest director (Fritz Lang) and its crass producer (Palance). In a stylized crash, the car itself becomes a space of aesthetic collision.

25 April

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, (*Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*), directed by Pedro Almodóvar

Spain, 1988, 35 mm, color, 89 min. With Carmen Maura, Antonio Banderas, Julieta Serrano. Spanish with English subtitles

In this farcical hit comedy, Pepa (Maura) is left by her lover, and she tries to contact him to find out why. Pepa's solitary journeys across Madrid in a taxi are enlivened by her exchanges with an empathetic driver, predating HBO's popular *Taxicab Confessions*. In the film, the taxi is an intermediate zone between two places without being in any place

Open Class Sessions

These special sessions of Wellesley College courses held in the DMCC are free and open to the public.

Outside In: French Film and Song Get Into Cars

Assistant professor James Petterson, French Department

Thursday 28 March 11:10 am - 12:20pm Chandler Gallery

France's simultaneous repulsion and fascination for car culture from the perspective of twentieth-century French film and song will be explored. Films by François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, Claude Chabrol, and Mahmoud Zemmouri, as well as the many French songs devoted to cars by such song-artists as Serge Gainsbourg and Jacques Dutronc, and groups such as NTM and Stereototal will be considered.

You're driving me out of my mind: The Internal Landscape of Kerouac's On The Road

Professor Carol Dougherty, Classical Studies Department

Tuesday 16 April 11:10am – 12:20pm Chandler Gallery

The impact of gender on the construction of travel, the connection between travel and romance, and the association of travel and knowledge will be investigated. The session will also explore how those themes laid out so forcefully in the *Odyssey* continue to dominate such works as Kerouac's *On the Road*.

Visiting Artists

Carl Scholz Tuesday 26 March 3-4pm Collins Cinema

Carl Scholz has created the installation *Cherry* for the DMCC plaza. Recipient of a Skowhegan Fellowship, he currently teaches sculpture at Brandeis University.

Lorna Simpson Thursday 11 April 7pm Collins Cinema

Lorna Simpson combines text with images to explore issues of race, gender, identity as well as public and private spaces and acts. Her work is held in the Art Institute of Chicago, Walker Art Center, Museum of Modern Art among other international museums.

Related Exhibitions

About Away: Women, Photography and Travel, DMCC Print Study Corridor

9 April – 26 May

Photographs from the permanent collection explore the observations and motives of women as they travel away from home to make pictures. These travelers report, savor or question the social and natural landscape they encounter, whether close at hand or far away. This installation is organized with senior lecturer Marilyn Sides in conjunction with her course on travel literature. The exhibition includes work by Virginia Beahan and Laura McPhee, Lois Conner, Flor Garduno, Helen Levitt, Mary Peck and Marion Post Wolcott.

Automobile Interiors: Home on the Road

Opening February 2002 The Museum of Transportation, 15 Newton Street, Brookline, Massachusetts 02445

This exhibition traces the evolution of the motorcar from simple means of transportation to rolling parlor with autos from 1901 to 1926.

For more information please call 617-522-6547 <http://www.mot.org> For Additional information, programs and tours contact the museum 781 283 3382.

<http://www.wellelsey.edu/DavisMuseum/davismenu.html>

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