FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Trustees and deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum Announce
Photosynthesis, A Museum-Wide Display Featuring Three Unique Photography Shows
Opening October 12, 2019

Boston & Lincoln, MA – August 21, 2019 – The Trustees and deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum announce the fall opening of Photosynthesis, a museum-wide celebration and examination of photography spanning a range of topics and artists. Opening October 12, 2019 and on view through March 29, 2020, Photosynthesis is comprised of three separate shows, featuring works drawn from deCordova’s permanent collection along with loans from artists and private collectors.

All of deCordova’s galleries will be devoted to photography during this duration, honoring the Museum’s strong history of supporting the photographic arts. All the Marvelous Surfaces: Photography Since Karl Blossfeldt explores the impact of Blossfeldt’s acclaimed 1920s series Art Forms in Nature on present-day approaches to ornamentation, scale, and abstraction. Peter Hutchinson: Landscapes of My Life offers visitors a rare opportunity to view photographs and photo-collages by an under-recognized pioneer of Land Art. Truthiness and the News examines the evidentiary role of photography from the first half of the twentieth century to the current age of post-truth politics.

“We are excited to present three timely exhibitions that unite photography’s expansive capacity for artistic expression and engagement with urgent contemporary issues,” says Sarah Montross, Senior Curator. “Photography is often considered the most democratic artistic medium—a form of imagery that we all use and absorb daily but may not have time to question and appreciate. These shows blur the lines between nature and art, fact and fiction, and reveal photography’s potency in shaping perception of the world around us.”

About PHOTOSYNTHESIS

Photography has long benefitted from assumptions that it faithfully documents our world. The medium’s supposed neutrality is particularly unquestioned when used for scientific study or journalistic purposes. Upending these assumptions, Photosynthesis encompasses a suite of exhibitions at deCordova spanning diverse topics from botanical design to Land Art, news reportage to photo-conceptualism—fields that have relied on photography’s ability to zoom, crop, and manipulate objects of study to provide detailed visual evidence. The three exhibitions that form Photosynthesis look back
to photography’s origins and foundational artists and photojournalists to contextualize contemporary notions of nature, photography, and truth.

**All the Marvelous Surfaces: Photography Since Karl Blossfeldt**

This group exhibition is inspired by German photographer Karl Blossfeldt’s acclaimed *Art Forms in Nature* (1928), a collection of magnified plant specimens that immediately enthralled viewers with exquisite details of curling flower petals and the fractal growth of leaves. *All the Marvelous Surfaces* reorients photography through Blossfeldt’s focus on patterning, scale, and surface detail, establishing his impact on the evolution of modern and contemporary photographic practices. The show delves into issues such as biases against ornamentation, the rise of surrealist estrangement, and the intersections of photography and sculpture throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Drawn mainly from deCordova’s permanent collection, the artists range from mid-century icons such as Aaron Siskind and Harold Edgerton to contemporary figures who are advancing the photographic medium today, including Ellen Carey, Matt Saunders, and Erin Shirreff.

**Peter Hutchinson: Landscapes of My Life**

Since the late 1960s, Peter Hutchinson has explored the construction of nature and language through his photographs, collages, and films. He focuses on ecological systems of growth and decay, continuities between microscopic and macro scales, and the reciprocal relationships of text and image. This exhibition, the first museum survey of Hutchinson’s work in the United States in decades, traces his photographic practice across fifty years, beginning with documentation of seminal land art installations staged in diverse locations, from the rim of a Mexican volcano to the waters of Cape Cod. The show introduces Hutchinson’s original approach to photo-conceptualism called Narrative Art, revealing his understated, playful wit and prioritization of subjective experience. Recent works on view underscore his poetic appreciation of nature through photo-collages of fantastical landscapes that combine images from his extensive world travels and beloved garden in Provincetown, MA.
Truthiness and the News

This exhibition explores the evidentiary role of photography, from the heyday of newsprint in the first half of the twentieth century to the current age of post-truth politics. For decades before the current discussions of “truthiness” and “fake news,” press photographs offered viewers a multiplicity of truths depending on how editors printed them. Featuring works from the 1940s to the present, Truthiness in the News highlights photojournalists and socially engaged photographers, such as Charles “Teenie” Harris and Barbara Norfleet, alongside spreads from the newspapers and magazines that published their photographs, and contemporary works responding to the dissemination of the news today. Displaying lush photographs of current events as “art” next to the same images presented as “news” offers rich insights into the way photography informs our politics and beliefs.

Related Events

Art and Journalism in the Era of Post-Truth Politics
Saturday, November 2, 1–4:30 pm
Free with admission or membership
In conjunction with Truthiness and the News, this symposium brings together journalists, historians, and artists to reflect on how we look at images and read the news critically in an age in which the concept of truth seems to hold ever less weight.

Gallery Talk with Artist Lucy Kim
Wednesday, November 13, 6:30–7:30 pm
Free, registration requested
Join artist Lucy Kim and curator Sarah Montross for an in-gallery conversation about Kim’s work in relation to photographs in All the Marvelous Surfaces.

What’s Your Truth?
Saturday, November 16, 10 am–12:30 pm
Ticketed
Using newspapers, magazines, and advertisements as source materials, put your truth on display with a glass and collage project inspired by the Truthiness exhibition.

Art and the Environment: A Local History
Thursday, November 21, 6:30–8 pm
Free, registration requested
How have artists responded to New England's diverse coastal and river ecosystems, as well as the region's layered indigenous, colonial, and industrial histories? Art historian Kirsten Swenson connects past and present environmental art and landscape design, from Frederick Law Olmsted to Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Mags Harries, and Lajos Héder.

**Art Nouveau Mosaic Workshop**  
Wednesdays, December 4 and 11, 6:30–9 pm  
Ticketed  
Inspired by exhibition artworks and Karl Blossfeldt’s art nouveau influences, create a nature-inspired mosaic in this two-session workshop with artist Emily Bhargava.

**Curator-led tour of Truthiness and the News**  
Thursday, January 30, 6–7 pm  
Free, registration requested  
Join Koch Curatorial Fellow Sam Adams for an in-depth walkthrough of exhibition *Truthiness and the News*.

**Image Captions**

Karl Blossfeldt, *Urformen der Kunst (page 41)*, 1928/1929, photogravure, 10 1/4 x 8 inches (image); 12 1/4 x 9 3/4 inches (paper), Gift of Arlette and Gus Kayafas in honor of Jennifer Gross. Photograph by Clements Photography and Design, Boston.

Peter Hutchinson, *Conflicting Seasons: Alliterative Landscape Series*, 2002, photo and ink on board, 40 x 29 7/8 inches (board); Collection of the Artist. Photograph by Clements Photography and Design, Boston.


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About deCordova
Established in 1950 and located just twenty miles west of Boston, deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum is dedicated to fostering the creation and exploration of contemporary sculpture and art through a dynamic slate of rotating exhibitions, innovative learning opportunities, a constantly changing thirty-acre landscape of large-scale, outdoor, modern and contemporary sculpture, and site-specific installations. DeCordova became a part of The Trustees as of July 2019. To learn more, visit www.decordova.org.

About The Trustees
Founded in the City of Boston by landscape architect and open space visionary Charles Eliot in 1891, The Trustees is the nation’s first and the Commonwealth’s largest preservation and conservation nonprofit. For more than 125 years, we have worked to preserve and protect dynamic natural and cultural sites—from beaches and community gardens, to farms, historic homesteads, designed landscapes, and hiking trails—for public use and enjoyment. Today we are working to engage a larger constituency of Massachusetts residents, members, visitors, and public and private partners in our work to help protect our beloved and fragile natural, ecological, cultural, and coastal sites for current and future generations. To learn more, visit www.thetrustees.org.

General Information
DeCordova’s summer hours (Memorial Day weekend through Columbus Day weekend) are every day, Monday–Sunday, 10 am–5 pm. DeCordova’s winter hours (beginning after Columbus Day weekend) are Wednesday–Friday, from 10 am–4 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 10 am–5 pm. Admission: $14 for adults, $12 for seniors, $10 for students (ages 13 and up), and free for children 12 and under. Members, cyclists, Lincoln residents, and active duty military personnel and their families are admitted free of charge with proper ID. Visit decordova.org or call 781.259.8355 for more information.