DeCordova announces the 13th recipient of the Rappaport Prize: Suara Welitoff

Lincoln, MA, October 10, 2012—DeCordova Sculpture Park and Museum is pleased to announce Suara Welitoff as the 13th recipient of the prestigious Rappaport Prize, which annually awards $25,000 to a mid-career contemporary artist with ties to New England. The Rappaport Prize is among the most generous awards of its kind in the region. Two years ago, deCordova’s Director Dennis Kois announced that the Rappaport Foundation endowed the Rappaport Prize in perpetuity, providing annual recognition and support for outstanding artists for decades to come.

Kois notes, “We are thrilled to give this important prize to such a deserving Boston-area artist. The Museum has long admired Welitoff’s work, and we are excited to support and promote her practice in this way. The Rappaport Prize symbolizes the commitment of the Rappaport Foundation to the local arts community—a commitment deCordova shares. Congratulations are due to Suara and thanks to Phyllis and Jerry Rappaport for their continued leadership and support.”

Suara Welitoff writes, “I’d like to express my gratitude and thanks to the Rappaports and the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum for this generous gift. I am tremendously honored to receive the Rappaport Prize in support and recognition of my art. The Prize will give me time to research and explore materials, and to make new art with the hope of pushing my work to a new level. I’m thrilled by this great opportunity.”

About the Artist

Suara Welitoff is a filmmaker and video artist who creates lyrical and meditative videos that elevate the everyday to the poetic. Welitoff works with short sequences of film that she alters by slowing the tempo and reducing the color to a single hue or limited palette. Set in an infinite loop, the videos take on a beautiful, even hypnotic effect.

In Welitoff’s work, seconds of film are stretched into minutes and hours—traditional structures of time and narrative are discarded in favor of mining a charged gesture or sequence. The chosen moment is often appropriated from a film or the news, but in its reduced and reworked form, retrains only a trace of the original source material. In Clouds (history repeating itself), of 2009, a violent riot is transformed into an underwater ballet. Or in videos like Kiss (2010), where birds meet midair, and Rorschach (2010) where the wind billows a woman’s skirt, Welitoff isolates and
transforms these moments. Slowed and abstracted, the fragmented actions become melancholic poems. What was specific and personal begins to speak to something more broadly human and universal.

Her videos have often been called “mechanical watercolors” because of their atmospheric haziness and seductive, slow pacing. Like watercolors, they also capture something fleeting and temporal, but as moving images set in a rhythmic cycle, insist on a single moment’s transcendence.

Welitoff’s *Kiss* (2010) was included in the outdoor video exhibition *Nature Special*, organized by deCordova Curator Dina Deitsch, on the Rose Kennedy Greenway in 2011. Lexi Lee Sullivan, Assistant Curator at deCordova notes that “in many ways, Suara is a visual poet. Her work reveals the essence of an action, that when seen repeatedly, takes on a haunted, melancholic quality that like our memory of charged events, plays over and over in our mind’s eye.”

Suara Welitoff was born in Jersey City, NJ in 1951. She works and lives in Cambridge, MA and has been a Boston resident for almost 30 years. Her work is included the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Worcester Art Museum; Deutsche Bank, New York; List Visual Arts Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, among others and has been exhibited in the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston; NGBK, Berlin; Participant Inc. and Threadwaxing Space, New York; Western Bridge, Seattle; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and CCC Strozzina, Florence. Suara Welitoff lives and works in Cambridge, MA and shows with Barbara Krakow Gallery, Boston and Galerie Anita Beckers, Frankfurt.

**About the Rappaport Prize**

Since its inception in 2000, the Rappaport Prize has been, foremost, an investment in both an individual and in the broader community. Founded and funded by the Phyllis and Jerome Lyle Rappaport Foundation, the Rappaport Prize follows the Foundation’s mission of promoting leadership in public policy, medical research, and art. Endowed at and selected annually by the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, the Rappaport Prize supports significant artists while educating the public about developments in American contemporary art.

Each prize is given to celebrate the achievement and potential of an artist who has already demonstrated significant creativity and vision and encourage the artist to continue in a career of innovative art making. Together, deCordova and the Rappaport Foundation hope to create a community of accomplished artists whose careers have been enhanced by the recognition of the Rappaport Prize. In 2010, the Rappaport Foundation endowed the prize in perpetuity, ensuring the continuation of this prize for years to come.

**Past Prize Winners**

2011 Orly Genger  
2010 Liza Johnson  
2009 Dave Cole  
2008 Ursula von Rydingsvard
Educational Programming

Rappaport Prize Lecture with Suara Welitoff
Wednesday, April 3, 2013, 6:30 pm
Location: Massachusetts College of Art and Design, 621 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA

Join us for a conversation between Cambridge-based video artist Suara Welitoff and video art collector Manuel de Santaren at the Pozen Center at Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Welitoff is the 2012 recipient of deCordova's prestigious Rappaport Prize, an annual award given out to an established contemporary artist with ties to the New England area.

General Information

DeCordova is open Tuesday through Sunday, from 10 am to 5 pm and on select Monday holidays. To coincide with the new Strategic Plan, the cost of admission has changed to the following: $14 for adults, $12 for seniors, $10 for students (ages 13 and up), and Free for children 12 and under. Members, Lincoln residents, and active duty military personnel and their families are admitted free of charge with proper ID. The Sculpture Park is open year-round during daylight hours. Guided public tours of the Museum’s main galleries take place every Thursday at 2 pm and Sunday at 2 pm. Tours of the Sculpture Park are given on Saturday and Sunday at 1 pm from April to November. All guided tours are free with Campus admission. Visit decordova.org or call 781.259.8355 or further information.

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