OVERVIEW

Rebuilding the Present brings together artists whose works engage a spectrum of meditative practices that provide models to help face the difficulties in our everyday lives – and to highlight our connections to ourselves, our communities, and the environment. The paintings, objects, audio works, and performance documentation on view point toward a pressing need to be wholly present in order to combat the ever-growing chaos in our world. Presented in partnership with the David Lynch Foundation, Rebuilding the Present suggests that meditation can function as a tool of not only self-care but of social justice writ large, offering practitioners a sense of agency to cope with trauma, depression, mental illness, and other challenges.

ARTISTS
Leslie Baum, Meredith Haggerty, Cameron Harvey, Susan Hiller, David Lynch, Stan Shellabarger, and Rhonda Wheatley

PARTNER
The David Lynch Foundation is a nonprofit organization, founded in 2005 by filmmaker, artist and philanthropist David Lynch, to address the epidemic of trauma and toxic stress among at-risk populations through the implementation of the evidence-based Transcendental Meditation technique. DLF has helped more than one million children and adults worldwide, with a focus on underserved middle school and high school students, veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress and their families, and women and children survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. DLF also works with those in recovery, the homeless, prison populations, people living with HIV/AIDS, and others.

ABOUT WEINBERG/NEWTON GALLERY
Weinberg/Newton Gallery aims to create space for dialogue about the many social justice issues that concern our local Chicago community and beyond. In collaboration with artists and non-profit organizations, we work together to cultivate a culture of consciousness and inspire change by way of exhibitions, panel discussions, film screenings, artist talks, and more.
A desire to plumb our own depths is fundamental to humanity. Artmaking is often a manifestation of this exploration of inner consciousness. Likewise, the practice of meditation has ancient origins and continues to thrive to this day. For millennia, people have sought peace, clarity, self-knowledge, and even ecstasy through intentional, deep meditative practices. Today, the benefits of engaging in creative and meditative pursuits hold tremendous potential to equip practitioners with senses of agency, beginning within and radiating outward, even (perhaps especially) as these practices are devalued by hegemonic US institutions. Rebuilding the Present brings together artworks by seven artists who employ various meditative modes in order to highlight our connections to ourselves, our communities, and the environment. Presented in partnership with the David Lynch Foundation, Rebuilding the Present suggests that meditation can function as a tool of not only self-care but of social justice writ large.

Some of Rebuilding the Present's artworks explicitly mark the passage of time, in scopes both epic and intimate. Stan Shellabarger's Walking Balls and photographic performance documentation manifest the artist's precise actions to quantify lived time by tracing the paths he has walked through the simplest of means: grooves worn into fields with repeated footsteps, string used to trace travel. These gestures bring the seemingly limitless matter of the passage of time to a personal scale and elucidate the impact that each body has on the earth.

Other artworks meld abstraction and figuration in order to express energetic phenomena beyond what can be seen. Images in Susan Hiller's photographic series Homage to Marcel Duchamp take as their point of departure an early painting by the eponymous artist, in which Duchamp adorned the sitter with colorful emanations. Hiller connects Duchamp's formal use of these vivid halos to the popular practice of contemporary aura photography. She appropriates aura photographs that she finds online, highlighting a sense of commonality – yours may be chartreuse and mine may be blue, but we both contain electric colors. Cameron Harvey presents both large, veil-like paintings that hang in the center of the gallery's space, reanimated, and smaller-scale colored pencil drawings. Both sets of works are made up of layers – of translucent fabric, of hue – to emphasize the ever-shifting connection between the inner self and the corporeal. The bold, graphic lithographs of renowned artist and filmmaker David Lynch, printed in black and red, push forward the recognizable while also pulling away from it, presenting fragmented bodies and warped
pathways which illustrate the nonlinear nature of consciousness. These artists' works present us with traces of embodied experience that are as exuberant as they are ambivalent, as grounded in the body as they are reflective of the psyche's flitters and flinches.

Objects by Rhonda Wheatley and Leslie Baum invite more direct visitor participation, offering opportunities for physical and mental grounding and ascendance. Wheatley's *Power Objects* are talis(wo)men of femme-generated energy, comprised of carefully chosen ephemera from herbs to snakeskins to seashells. Each object is calibrated to address a different set of psychic needs; as a group, they generously confront viewers with opportunities for self-reflection. Baum's *Window Seats* are at once abstract paintings and comfortable cushions. The objects' soft, giving surfaces are covered in organic black marks. Viewers are invited to also become sitters, placing themselves into the artworks' context quite literally.

And finally, or maybe back at the beginning, Meredith Haggerty's contribution to the exhibition is a set of guided meditation instructions, honed specifically from the other artworks in *Rebuilding the Present*. These recitations are offered to visitors via individual headsets, à la self-guided museum audio tours, so each participant can have their own experience, in their own body, with the space of the gallery and the art in it.

Our partner for *Rebuilding the Present*, the David Lynch Foundation works to teach the technique of Transcendental Meditation to populations who are especially vulnerable to the effects of stress and trauma, including young students in under-resourced schools, veterans suffering from PTSD, survivors of domestic abuse, and people facing loss, addiction, homelessness, and incarceration. Peer-reviewed research has shown that the practice of Transcendental Meditation can reduce the health risks of stress-related disorders and strengthen cognition. By equipping people with a simple coping method that they can use anywhere, without much spare time or any special equipment, the David Lynch Foundation empowers individuals to take care of themselves – and this kind of deep, genuine care ripples outward, to great social and political effect.
LOCATION
Unless noted, all events are free
and open to the public, and will
take place at Weinberg/Newton
Gallery.

300 W Superior Street, Suite 203
Chicago, IL 60654

Handicap accessible entrance
is located at 730 N Franklin
Street, call the gallery upon
arrival.

The gallery may be reached at
312 529 5090 or info@weinberg
newtongallery.com

Rebuilding the Present

OPENING RECEPTION
FRIDAY, JANUARY 18, 5–8 PM

MORE EVENTS TO COME

SEE WEINBERGNEWTONGALLERY.COM FOR DETAILS
ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

LESLIE BAUM is an artist whose painting-based installations are invitational and deeply informed by her twenty plus years as a museum educator at the Art Institute of Chicago. Baum received her BA from the University of Vermont and studied abroad at the Glasgow School of Art. Baum has exhibited nationally and internationally, including exhibitions in New York, San Francisco, Portland, Mexico City, Rome, and South Korea. 2018 exhibitions include Regarding the Unknown at Yellow Door Gallery in Des Moines, night brings day/day brings night at Heaven Gallery in Chicago, Inquiry 01 at Spertus Institute of Jewish Learning in Chicago, Waterworld at Glass Curtain Gallery in Chicago, Local Comfort at LVL3 in Chicago, and Pushing Up Daisies at PEANA Gallery in Monterrey, Mexico. Her drawings and paintings are in permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Elmhurst Art Museum. Her work has been reviewed extensively including in Artforum, Art in America, Hyperallergic, and the Chicago Tribune. She has received residencies at Yaddo and the Vermont Studio Center. Baum lives and works in Chicago.
Using collage, storytelling, and performance, MEREDITH HAGGERTY explores the process and pedagogy of mind-body practices and ways they allow us to connect to our experience and frame it.

After completing an MFA in 2007, Haggerty worked for a decade at the University of Chicago to develop campus-wide programming in mind-body medicine. Her programs explored the relations between art, wellness, education, and spirituality, helping participants develop life and work patterns that promote physical and emotional well-being. This included site-specific yoga and meditation classes in galleries, gyms, and campus chapels that addressed themes like resilience, inclusiveness and acceptance. Haggerty also worked clinically with students to relieve stress and pain and promote wellness. At the University of Chicago’s medical school, she collaborated with faculty to develop and teach a fourth-year Empathy class and mind-body curriculums in the first year symposium and family medicine rotation. In 2013, she was granted the Campus and Student Life Award for Outstanding Service to the Community. Haggerty currently makes picture book manuscripts, illustrations, and performances that emphasize deep listening and are rooted in Buddhist teachings, the fabulist tradition and somatic experience.
CAMERON HARVEY investigates the relationship between the physical body and the spiritual plane. Her paintings and drawings explore perception and boundaries and are at once both unraveling and becoming whole. Harvey’s work is grounded in her love of nature and her interest in astronomy and the cosmos as well as meditation and yoga. Color field painting and abstract expressionism, as well as her experience with printmaking, also influence her work. Harvey was born in Vermont and graduated from Wellesley College before teaching at La Scuola Internazionle di Grafica in Italy and then attending School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She believes in the importance of travel and cultural exchange and has participated in programs and residencies including The School for International Training in Cameroon, The Vermont Studio Center, and the Lijiang Studio in China. Most recently she was a 2017-18 BOLT Resident at the Chicago Artists Coalition. She has exhibited work in Chicago, Indianapolis, St. Louis, New York, India, Italy, and China. She has received grants from the City of Chicago, the Illinois Arts Council, and 3Arts.

IMAGE: CAMERON HARVEY, WHAT I SEE WITH MY EYES CLOSED, SEPT 5, 2017
SUSAN HILLER was born in 1940 and grew up in and around Cleveland, Ohio until 1952 when her family moved to South Florida. Hiller has been based mainly in London since the early 1960s. After several exhibitions of her paintings and a series of collaborative ‘group investigations’, in the early 1980s she began to make innovative use of audio and visual technology. Her groundbreaking installations, multi-screen videos, and audio works have achieved international recognition and are widely acknowledged to be a major influence on younger artists. Each of Hiller’s works is based on specific cultural artifacts from our society, which she uses as basic materials. Many of her works explore the liminality of certain phenomena including the practice of automatic writing, near death experiences, and collective experiences of unconscious, subconscious, and paranormal activity. Her work is found internationally in both private and public collections and her career has been recognized by mid-career survey exhibitions at London’s Institute of Contemporary Arts in 1986, Tate Liverpool in 1996, and, most recently by, a major retrospective exhibition at Tate Britain in 2011.
DAVID LYNCH studied painting at the Boston Museum School and Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Lynch’s five-decade career includes an extensive body of painting, drawing, photography, printmaking, installation, music, and film. While studying at PAFA in the late ‘60s, Lynch had a vision to make his first ‘moving painting’: a sculptural painting beneath a moving projection titled Six Men Getting Sick. This multimedia work marked Lynch’s first foray into video and filmmaking. Since this time his prolific body of work has touched on subjects of the organic body and industrial sites in various states of decay: describing a deeper human experience both beyond and within the everyday. Often depicting these scenes with a language of surrealism and mystery, Lynch’s work balances at the porous divide between the body and the world it inhabits.

In 2015 Lynch was the subject of a 50-year retrospective at the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane, Australia. Previously, Brett Littman, Director of The Drawing Center in New York, curated a thematic selection of works addressing Lynch’s use of naming through narrative text. Earlier important solo exhibitions include the Fondation Cartier pour l’art contemporain in Paris, the Musée d’Orsay in Paris, the GL Strand in Copenhagen, and the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture in Moscow among other international institutions.
STAN SHELLABARGER’s performances, works on paper, prints, and artist books employ alternative drawing methods, addressing the body and the Earth to create minimal abstract objects. He takes everyday activities — walking and writing, sometimes breathing — to extreme measures in endurance-based performance work. The repetition of the activity leads to massive accumulations of marks, recording discrete units of time and space that amplify traces humans leave on the Earth: repetition is necessary so that these extremely subtle marks emerge as visible artistic interventions.

Stan Shellabarger has work in the permanent collections of The Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Minneapolis Institute of Art, The National Gallery of Canada, and the Newark Public Library. His work has been written about in *Art in America, Artforum.com, Chicago Tribune, Art in Print, Chicago Magazine,* and *ArtSlant.* His work has been shown at Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nice, MCA Chicago, Contemporary Art Museum Raleigh, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, and Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago. Shellabarger received his MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is represented by Western Exhibitions in Chicago, where he lives and works.

*Image: Stan Shellabarger, Walking Balls, 2014*
RHONDA WHEATLEY is a multidisciplinary artist who explores healing and consciousness expansion through her visual and written works, workshops, and interactive performances. Wheatley’s recent exhibitions include solo shows at Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago and Aurora Public Art and group shows at Art League Houston, Donnelley Foundation in Chicago, Terrain Biennial in Oak Park, and Gallery 400 in Chicago. She has performed as part of the In Progress series at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, as well as at EXPO Chicago 2018 and Chicago Home Theater Festival. She has facilitated workshops at Logan Center at University of Chicago, Smart Museum, Chicago Artists Coalition’s 2017 LAUNCH Residency, and Eclipsing Festival at Links Hall in Chicago. In 2017 Wheatley received the CAC Maker Grant’s inaugural Coney Family Fund Award and a 3Arts Make a Wave grant. Additionally, she teaches at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and HPAC. Wheatley earned a BA in English Literature from Loyola University and an MA in Writing from DePaul University.
Through this exhibition we invite attendees to explore the relationship between meditation, creativity, and peace. These three pillars are central to David Lynch’s unique outlook on the world, the work of the David Lynch Foundation, and the artists and artworks included in this exhibition.

We believe meditation can promote positive change by helping to heal and transform individuals from within, as well as to fuel the creativity needed to address our most pressing societal concerns. Exploring meditation through art in a communal setting is a pure and direct way to raise awareness and deepen people’s understanding of Transcendental Meditation and the work of the David Lynch Foundation. We’re proud to partner with Weinberg/Newton Gallery to showcase the impacts meditation can have on promoting equity and justice for individuals, community, and society.

Mindy Ramaker
Creative Director
David Lynch Foundation
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Monday – Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM

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