ALMINE RECH

José Lerma
Domestic in a Foreign Sense

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The Madison Museum of Contemporary Art (MMoCA) celebrates the legacy of the Wisconsin Triennial with three new exhibitions.
The Wisconsin Triennial is a cornerstone of MMoCA's exhibition calendar and a core part of the Museum's mission. Every three years, the exhibition charts the latest art being made across the state, capturing the richness and variety of artistic expression in Wisconsin.

The 2025 Wisconsin Triennial features artworks by 24 established and emerging artists from across the state. "The process of selecting the final roster of participating artists is always a formidable yet exhilarating challenge for a major survey like the Wisconsin Triennial", says Paul Baker Prindle, MMoCA's Gabriele Haberland Director. "We are confident that we have curated an exceptional group of artists whose practices beautifully reflect the richness of Wisconsin's contributions to global contemporary art".

The selected artists of the 2025 Wisconsin Triennial are: Theresa Abel, Tom Antell, Lois Bielefeld, Yeonhee Cheong, Angelica Contreras, Cassie Marie Edwards, Nomka Enkhee, Sarah FitzSimons, Jolene Frechette, Gerit Grimm, John Hitchcock, Kelli Hoppmann, Katie Hudnall, Tom Jones, Helen Lee, Taj Matumbi, Guzzo Pinc, John Riepenhoff, Christina Ruhaak, Lauren Semivan, Leslie Smith III, Michael Velliquette, Shane Walsh, and Christina A. West.

The origin of the Wisconsin Triennial dates back to 1978, when the Wisconsin Biennial exhibition at the Madison Art Center began, later becoming a Triennial as the Art Center became the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art. As part of the Museum's mission, MMoCA has regularly acquired artworks from these exhibitions, adding them to the permanent collection. The exhibition, 45 Years of Triennials: Acquisitions 1978–2022, showcases selected pieces from this collection, highlighting the evolving interests of Wisconsin artists.

In addition, MMoCA is presenting 'Domestic in a Foreign Sense,' a solo exhibition by Puerto Rico-based artist José Lerma. 'Domestic in a Foreign Sense' features over a dozen portraits created in thick impasto with limited brush strokes. The title is a transposition of the phrase 'foreign in a domestic sense', which is how US Supreme Court Justice Henry Brown described Puerto Rico in his 1901 decision that placed the island as neither fully part of the United States nor an independent country. This contradictory statement has led to years of uncertainty for Puerto Rico.

With a career spanning over two decades, Lerma's return to the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art is particularly significant, as it was here that he had his first museum exhibition in the 1999 Wisconsin Triennial after earning his MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"For over 125 years, MMoCA has had the great privilege of amplifying creative voices," shares Baker Prindle, adding, "We continue this tradition by supporting artists as they explore the ever-evolving meaning of contemporary life and inspire critical conversations within our community and beyond".

Lead sponsorship for the 2025 *Wisconsin Triennial exhibitions* is generously provided by Paul J. Reckwerdt and Ellen S. Rosner with additional support from the estate of Theodora "Teddy" Zehner. Major sponsorship for the 2025 *Wisconsin Triennial* series is provided by Paula and David Kraemer and Joe and Mary Ellyn Sensenbrenner. Supporting sponsorship is from Marc Vitale and Darcy Kind, Katie Howarth Ryan, Diane Seder and Bruce Rosen, Dane Arts, and Anne Neujahr Morrison and Jacob Morrison.