



WADSWORTH ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First U.S. Exhibition by Artist Dulce Chacón Explores Human Feats and Failures in the Frontiers of Air and Space

Hartford, Conn. (Oct. 5, 2016) – Opening Friday, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art will feature Mexico City artist Dulce Chacón in her debut exhibition in the United States, and her first solo endeavor outside of Mexico. “Fallen Angels,” featuring 70 of the artist’s skillfully rendered drawings, is the 175th installation of the museum’s groundbreaking MATRIX contemporary art program. The exhibition runs through Jan. 8, 2017.

Chacón’s distinctive, ink wash drawings have been recognized globally through major group shows in Asia, Central America, Europe and South America. Her work typically addresses memory and the perception of time. In her project for the Wadsworth Atheneum, Chacón studies the ephemeral nature of news imagery while also probing the odd relationship between Earth and the heavens posed by the age of human flight. Beginning with familiar images obtained from newspapers, telecasts and the internet, Chacón reconstructs human attempts—successful and failed alike—to conquer the heavens through advancements in technology. The result is 70 meticulously hand-wrought, and ultimately traditional, ink wash drawings that mine the frontiers of air and space along with the explorers of those outer limits: scientists, engineers, pilots, astronauts and daredevils.

“Dulce Chacón has had a longtime fascination with space and air,” says Emily Hall Tremainé Curator of Contemporary Art Patricia Hickson. “Her beautiful renderings carefully and, at times,

humorously investigate our obsession with exploring the great beyond, and capturing highly dramatic moments and even disastrous events. The artist rebuilds these visual stories in evocative displays that encourage new analyses of well-known events beyond what has been reported by the media. She shows us a strange and amazing world of innovation accomplished through human feats and failures.”

The exhibition is organized in four series. The largest, “Zenith,” reconstructs the narrative of Felix Baumgartner’s 2012 attempt to break the world record for the longest free fall from space in 44 drawings. Chacón sourced the images for “Zenith” from YouTube, where the stunt was broadcast live. Clustered in groupings across the wall, the series traces the extreme skydiver’s launch, rise, jump and landing. Another series, “Fallen Angels,” features recreations of media photographs of astronauts and capsules after they have safely landed back on Earth, where the peculiar, rural landing sites contrast sharply with the technological marvels of space travel. Also included in “Fallen Angels” is a single, large drawing recreating the iconic “LIFE” magazine photograph of “Fallen Angel” Evelyn McHale, who jumped from the Empire State Building to her death in 1947. Drawings in the “Sound Locators” series are derived from century-old documentary photographs depicting the curious, clunky contraptions created for military purposes to locate the sounds of approaching enemy aircraft during World War I and World War II, before the invention of radar. The final series, “Hindenburg,” documents the tragic end of the renowned German airship catching fire and burning over New Jersey in 1937, in six sequential images derived from historic newsreel footage.

Public Programs

Several programs relating to “Fallen Angels” are planned. Please visit www.thewadsworth.org for details:

- **Friday, Oct. 7, noon:** Gallery talk with artist Dulce Chacón and curator Patricia Hickson
- **Saturday, Oct. 8, 1 – 4 p.m.:** “Space Adventures” Second Saturdays for Families
- **Sunday, Nov. 6, 2 p.m.:** “The Great Beyond” Film Series, “Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb” (1964)
- **Sunday, Nov. 13, 2 p.m.:** “The Great Beyond” Film Series, “The Man Who Fell to Earth” (1976)

- **Sunday, Nov. 20, 2 p.m.:** “The Great Beyond” Film Series, “The Day the Earth Stood Still” (1951)

Exhibition Credit

Major support for MATRIX 175 is provided by the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation with the Consulate General of Mexico in New York and the Mexican Cultural Heritage Institute of New York. Additional support is provided by the Morris Joseloff Exhibition Fund. The MATRIX program is generously supported in part by Jeffrey G. Marsted and Marcia Reid Marsted, Carol LeWitt in honor of Andrea Miller-Keller, and the current and founding members of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art’s Contemporary Coalition. Support for the Wadsworth Atheneum is provided in part by the Greater Hartford Arts Council’s United Arts Campaign.

About MATRIX

Founded in 1975, the Wadsworth Atheneum’s MATRIX series of changing exhibitions of contemporary art was a groundbreaking program, the first of its kind to display the newest work by national and international contemporary artists in dialogue with the storied collections and exhibitions of a largely traditional encyclopedic museum. Since its first exhibition, MATRIX has shown over 1,000 works of art by more than 170 artists. For many distinguished artists—including Richard Tuttle, Neil Jenney, Jon Borofsky, Daniel Buren, Sylvia Plimack Mangold, Nancy Spero, Louise Lawler, Barbara Kruger, Gerhard Richter, Lorna Simpson, Carrie Mae Weems and Glenn Ligon—their MATRIX show at the Wadsworth Atheneum was their first solo museum exhibition in the United States.

About the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Founded in 1842, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art is the oldest continuously- operating public art museum in the United States. The museum’s nearly 50,000 works of art span 5,000 years, from Greek and Roman antiquities to the first museum collection of American contemporary art. The Wadsworth Atheneum’s five connected buildings—representing architectural styles including Gothic Revival and modern International Style—are located at 600 Main Street in Hartford, Conn. Hours: Wednesday – Friday: 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission: \$0 – 15; discounts for members, students and seniors; free

for Hartford residents with ID. Free “happy hour” admission Wednesday – Sunday, 4 – 5 p.m.
Public phone: (860) 278-2670; website: thewadsworth.org.

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