Dear friends of Omi,

I am to take you on a brief but meaningful visual journey through moments of the past summer that are now memories of yet another vibrant, extraordinary and engaging four weeks at Art Omi.

This is my seventh year as Director of Art Omi International Artists Residency, the first to have been founded of seven distinct programs that are hosted at Omi International Arts Center. Along the 23 years since its inception, Art Omi has grown together with its residents, the local community, and our friends and supporters scattered around the world. While the residency program is now well rooted into its own tradition and lively spirit, it still remains surprisingly fresh and stimulating to its residents as well as its audience and staff as it was back in 1992.

As Director of such incredibly synergic mix of artists and art practices, I could be seen as the conductor of a big band, an improvised and improbable orchestra of dozen of different voices and odd sounds. At first it is hard to imagine what the outcome may be, but eventually every action taken, every artwork created and every experiment attempted during the four weeks program find their place, flourish and amuse us. This catalogue is an attempt to echo that magic, a glimpse into all that makes Art Omi unique.

Before that incredibly dynamic moment that is Open Weekend, at the end of the residency when we open the doors to the public, artists are immersed into long hours of studio work, but also are bound together by sharing their every day life, away from anything familiar to them, embedded into a stunning environment that is abundant of mental and physical space to concentrate on their projects and art practices. The balance of studio work, shared living, exceptional surrounding is the fundament of the communal feeling our artists are enveloped in, in which long term collaborations and friendships are born.

If I were to summarize Art Omi into a word that would be: laugh: that beautiful tool that breaks any possible barrier among people of different cultures, countries and background. A candid, heartfelt, spontaneous laugh that bounds people together is often heard at Art Omi. Our artists get to know each other by laughing together. At Art Omi you will see individuals from very different backgrounds and very diverse cultures, sharing beautiful moment of simplicity.

The relaxed and joyous atmosphere that our program is wrapped into is not simply due to the breathtaking views we are so lucky to have on our campus; it is an elaborate alchemy put together on purpose: it is an important part of our mission that artists leave with a huge smile and perhaps a little tearful too, already nostalgic of a moment in time bound to leave a mark in their career and in their personal lives. Art Omi is not only a place to get work done, or get exposure to the prime New York City art scene. It is a place of growth and understanding; a place to let go of old systems and embrace new approaches to art, and life.
Since the very beginning of our program, we have been offering our resident artists the chance to work with Master Printers Ted and Melissa Braggins to produce series of Monotypes or Monoprints in our printshop. Each participating artist work with the Ted and Melissa for a full day of experimentation and production. The outcome is shown at Open Weekend. The Art Omi Archive, a collection of artworks donated to our organization by our resident artists, hold several hundreds of prints produced during the workshop.
Moukhtar Kocache has expertise in curatorial practice, philanthropy and cultural and civil society development. Born in Beirut and raised in Paris, he spent fifteen years in Washington DC and New York, and eight years in Cairo. Since 2012, he divides his time between New York, Paris and Istanbul.

From 2004 to 2012 he was Program Officer at the Ford Foundation’s regional office in Cairo. From 1998 to 2004 he was Director of Programs and Services at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council in New York.

He has an undergraduate degree from American University in Washington DC and a graduate degree from Columbia University in New York in international relations, art history and nonprofit management. He has curated, managed and organized exhibitions, and has consulted for and worked with art galleries, museums, not-for-profit organizations and foundations in the US, Europe and the Middle East. Moukhtat has taught seminars at university level and has contributed to catalogues, journals and periodicals. He has been a keynotep speaker at various specialized events and has received awards for his professional standing in the field.

His current interests include the sustainability of independent creative platforms, cultural and social justice philanthropy, the links between political philosophy and policy, alternative institutional structures, memory, film and material culture.
Lilly Wei is a New York-based art critic, writer and independent curator whose focus is contemporary art. Wei contributes to many publications in the United States and internationally and has written for Art in America since 1984. She is a contributing editor at ARTnews and a former contributing editor at Art Asia Pacific and frequently reports on international biennials and exhibitions. Wei has written numerous articles, reviews, essays and monographs on contemporary and modern artists.

She serves on the board of several not-for-profit art organizations, including that of the International Association of Art Critics (USA) and Art Omi and was critic-in-residence at Art Omi in 1997.

Her most recent curatorial project is “The Compromised Land: Recent Photography and Video from Israel” at the Neuberger Museum in Purchase, New York, August 11 - December 1, 2013.

Wei was born in Chengdu, China and has an MA in art history from Columbia University, New York.
Studio Visits Program

Every year around 30 arts professionals are invited to visit our campus and conduct studio visits with our resident artists. This year we have the pleasure of having with us the following individuals:

Anne Barlow / Executive Director / Art in General
Bennett Lieberman / Poet / Artist
Charlotte Kotik / Curator Emerita / Brooklyn Museum
David Rhodes / Artist / Critic
Ian Cofre / Curator / Former Director of Pinta Art Fair
Jill Conner / Art Critic / Curator / Editor / WhiteHot magazine
Koan Jeff Baysa / Curator / Art Omi Board Member
Mahnaz Fancy / Executive Director / ArteEast
Monica LoCascio / Art Consultant
Nicole Hayes / Curator / The Fields Sculpture Park
Paul Laster / Editor / ArtKrush / Contributing Editor / Flavorpill
Paulina Bebecka / Director / Postmasters Gallery
Peter Hopkins / Artist / Founder of ArtHelix / Brooklyn
Reem Fadda / Associate Curator Middle Eastern Art / Guggenheim
Renee Riccardo / Curator / Founder / Arena
Robert Blackson
Director of Exhibitions / Tyler School of Art
Sandi Slone
Artist / Art Omi Founding Board Member
Sara Reisman
Director / Percentage for Art / NYC DCA
Sasha Dees / Independent Curator
Sina Najafi / Cabinet Magazine
Stamatina Gregory
Independent Curator / Critic
Stephen Westfall / Artist
Susan Bowman & Saul Ostrow
Founders / Critical Practices / NY
Wendy Vogel / Associate Editor / Modern Painters

Barry Schwabsky / Art Critic / The Nation
Beth Stryker / Artist / Independent Curator
Claudia Calirman / Art Historian and Senior Curator
Florencia San Martin Riutort / Independent Curator
Jennie Lamensdorf / Curator / Francis Greenburger Collection
Kari Conte / Director of Program and Exhibitions / ISCP
Lia Gangitano / Founder / Director / Participant
Marco Antonini / Director / Nurture Art
Nathalie Angles / Founder & Director / Residency Unlimited
Omar Lopez Chahoud / Independent Curator

Antonio Jose Guzman in conversation with David Rhodes and Charlotte Kotik. Photo by Akemi Hiatt
Bashar Alhroub Palestine / Francis Greenburger Fellowship for Mitigating Ethnic and Religious Conflict
Lara Baladi Egypt / France
Jesus Benavente USA
Marcos Castro Mexico
Gopal Dagnogo Ivory Coast / France
Ira Eduardovna Uzbekistan / Israel / USA
Sara Eliassen Norway
Mauro Giaconi Argentina / Mexico
Wojciech Gilewicz Poland / USA / Adam Mickiewicz Institute Fellowship
Frances Goodman South Africa / Cecily Brown Fellowship
Antonio Jose Guzman Panama / The Netherlands
Taro Hattori Japan / USA
Jochen Höller Austria
Gilbert Hsiao USA
Nikolai Ishchuk Russia / United Kingdom
Siddhartha Kararwal India / Prana Studios Award
Lee Hojin South Korea / Paradise Culture Foundation Fellowship
Judith G. Levy USA / Charlotte Street Foundation Fellowship
Ligyung South Korea / Paradise Culture Foundation Fellowship
Claudia Losi Italy
Cynthia Madansky USA
Amarsaikhan Namsraijav Mongolia
Dominique Pétrin Canada / Antrev Habland Award
Howardena Pindell USA / The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation Fellowship
Caroline Rothwell United Kingdom / Australia / Australia Art Omi Australia Committee
Andreas Savva Cyprus
Frauke Schlitz Germany
Jessica Segall USA
Tyler Starr USA
Sunaura Taylor USA / Unlimit Art Fellowship

Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro
Bashar Alhroub’s monotype. Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro
I thought I was going to be isolated in the American countryside but I found myself absorbed and enchanted by a community of amazingly talented international artists. Making art, finding new creative possibilities, discovering one self and others, dancing, laughing, working and above all, sharing, is what the human, more than human, ArtOmi residency experience, was about. My gratitude goes to all the generous people who contributed to making these unforgettable times possible.
Jesus Benavente working in his studio. Photo by Ross Willows
Detail of Marcos Castro’s studio. Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro
“Omi Human Laboratory”. How to make 30 people from all over the world living together as one family? Claudia has The wand!

Art Omi residency was just like a bubble of oxygen in a fairy nature environment. A bubble of oxygen on my artistic lonesome path too. Meeting amazing people, and crazy talented artists sharing and confronting with their different artistic practices using a large palette of mediums.

More than painting I have learnt a lot from them about their creative process, their commitment and also about human nature.

Regarding networking: I think we created stronger and deeper links... Friendship.
A Thousand Years
Three Channel Video Installation. Video Still
Merging times by overlaying spaces
symbolic spaces/ cinematic spaces/ spaces of the real
into one moment.
Removing characters- trying to
empty the site of its meaning, but
instead becoming a trace activating
the imagining of the past
called memory, I guess. Personal memory. Collective
memory. How many minds needed for it to be a collective memory?
Maybe 30
Detail of artwork by Mauro Giaconi. Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro
Cuboids (work in progress) consist of three human scale painterly cubic structures that have been repainted over a dozen times since 2009, a series of photographs and a video. Cuboids are simultaneously sculptural and utilitarian objects, resembling tables or pedestals. In Art Omi they have been constantly changing their locations as well as colors and positions over the past four weeks. They’ve been melting into their immediate environment or contrasting with it, each time creating their setting anew or providing a commentary to it. Their ambiguous character, due to the cacophony of possible references, associations and situations the work is capable to create, opens up broader possibilities for interpretation.

Cuboids at first may simply be seen as a quite innocent commentary on various artistic media as painting, sculpture, installation or performance. The work exists however within the context of the recent economic crisis where artists often cannot really afford anymore to create works that may have existed just as work of art in a conventional sense. Therefore it also raises questions related to the artistic production as well as the sense and limits of artistic activities. Working on this project has been a considerable effort on many levels since it involves both constant challenging the objects’ physicality like their dimensions and weight, the logistics as for their transport and constant dislocation as well as many other problems they can create and solving them, including securing the necessary finances. Cuboids also touch upon issues related to modern aesthetics and evoke the overwhelming need for contextualization in arts nowadays somehow questioning it.

Cuboids have been exhibited in the framework of group exhibitions in ISCP Gallery (2010) and Queens Museum of Art (2013), both in New York. Solo exhibition of the project is planned for 2015 in cuchiffritos Gallery in New York. The work is on permanent public display in Arverne, in Far Rockaway, Queens in the front-yard of the house where the artist lives and works.

Cuboids installed at The Fields Sculpture Park.
Photo by the artist
Frances Goodman working on a sculpture in her studio. Photo by Ross Willows
ANTONIO JOSE GUZMAN

Antonio Jose Guzman’s studio. Photo by Ross Willows
Taro Hattori explaining his project to the public at Open Weekend.
Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro
Art Omi is very well organised! It is the best place to get into the art-scene in new york. You get important contacts, have good conversations with interesting people, and a lot of fun!! It was a wonderful intense experience!

Jochen Holler at work in his studio. Photo by Ross Willows
It would be harder to imagine a more cohesive group; after our time passed even though our backgrounds and our work ran a wide spectrum I think we all pretty much understood and had an appreciation for each other; something not possible in the real world. We were like well treated laboratory mice that were given anything and everything our hearts desired in a social experiment that succeeded beyond all expectations, laughing hysterically the whole time.
Nikolai Ishchuk is harnessing the basic components of photography and, through a mechanical process of layering is transforming the photographs into textured objects. His installation contains a number of prints and sculptures playing with the materiality of photography and the use of light-defined shapes as a foundation for expression.
Siddhartha Kararwal at work in his studio.
Photo by Ross Willows
Lee Hojin working in his studio. Photo by Ross Willows
I arrived at Omi thinking I was going to work on a particular project, and I left Omi having completed a very different one. Once I arrived I responded very powerfully to the people, the place, the landscape and the feeling of openness. And I let myself go with it.

It was an incredible experience to live and work in an international community, and I will never forget how easily we all connected to one another.

“Family Memoir”
Since my work is often about public/private narratives and informal/formal methods of conveying information, I created a family memoir on road signs, seeking to use a familiar mode of communicating in an unfamiliar way. Art Omi is located in the beautiful Hudson River Valley town of Omi, and as I drove around the area I noticed hand-make sign advertising yard sales and fresh vegetables.

I created over 30 wood signs that contained short texts describing familial events, history and feelings and place them along country roads, paths, and some of the fields belonging to the residency. Since signs point out and lead to something, I created posters that became the destination for the signs and displayed the posters on the walls next to my studio. These posters included more information and family photos, as they elaborated my family history.

Detail of site specific installation Family Memoir. Photo by Judith G. Levy
Ligyung in her studio. Photo by Akemi Hiatt
Cynthia Madansky working in the printshop. Photo by Salvatore Scalora
Dominique Petrin in her studio conversation with Jill Conner. Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro
Howardena Pindell in her studio. Photo by Judith G. Levy
“Art Omi was incredible. I made friends for life with 30 superb artists from 24 countries, had conversations with critics and visitors that nourished my thinking, was introduced to people who have created opportunities for me.

The largess, smarts and generosity of Art Omi and the team is something truly special.”
Andreas Savva testing his installation in Ledig Silo. Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro
My experiences at Art Omi had a great intensity. Most important was to experience the creative power of 30 artists, each of them in his or her own world. It was inspiring to enter in all kinds of dialogues about art. I discovered new ways of reflecting my own work and I’m expecting an impact on my future work.

One of Frauke Schlitz’s work done at Art Omi. Photo by the artist
Art Omi granted me the time and space to make headway on a new research project, and prepare for its upcoming exhibition. In my studio I was researching the anthropocene era and current cultural attitudes towards invasive species - reading medical journals and census data to debunk claims of damage from imported species and relating euthanization of exotic invasives to anti-immigration policies. My studio work at Omi culminated in an archive of topical research. I also made headway on a new video work presenting the research in man-on-the-street style “interviews” with invasive birds. This project will be on view at Wave Hill in September of this year.

More than anything, Omi granted time to think, reflect and dialog. The days and nights were rich with conversations about art, politics, music and minutea from various cultural perspectives. I live in New York City, an international city, and upon my return from Omi I wondered what was the difference between the multicultural conversations at Omi and my home in the city. For me, the difference at Omi was the atmosphere and architecture of the residency, which afforded the residents a space of tranquility, shared meals and time to really engage with in-depth conversation. Such trust and intimacy comes from being in a space where one feels comfortable, nurtured and inspired.
There are so many things to be struck by about Art Omi -- the beauty of the location, the studio spaces, the visitors program -- but the two things that really made my time there so incredible were the amazing people and Omi’s commitment to diversity and access.

I am extremely grateful for my time at Omi, the friendships I made, and the space given to me to focus on my practice.

Manatee-Self-Portrait. Photo by the artist
Clockwise from top: View from Dominique Petrin’s studio onto the Studio Barn. Frauke Schlitz with Daniel Obst and Omi’s Trustee Matthew Doering. View of Siddhartha Kararwal’s studio. View of Amarsaikhan Namsraijav’s studio. Photos by Claudia Cannizzaro
Clockwise from top: Howardena Pindell’s hands at work. Photo by Akemi Hiatt; Studio Manager Ralph Bedard and Andreas Savva working in the woodshop. Photo by Ross Willows; Artists at lunch. Photo by Claudia Cannizzaro. Ira Eduardovna in conversation with Art Omi Board member and Alumnus Dan Devine. Photo by Ross Willows
Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the following organizations and businesses for their continuing support:

**Adam Mickiewicz Institute** / Fellowship for an artist living and working in Poland

**Antrev Habland Management** / Fellowship for an artist living and working in Montreal, Canada

**Art Omi Australia Committee** / Fellowship for an artist living and working in Australia

**Charlotte Street Foundation**, Kansas City / Fellowship for an artist living and working in Kansas City

**Francis Greenburger** / Fellowship for an artist whose work deals with ethnic and religious conflict

**The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation** / Fellowship for a painter living and working in the United States

**Paradise Culture Foundation** / Fellowships for two artists living and working in South Korea

**Prana Studios** / Fellowship for an artist living and working in India

**Unlimit Art** / Fellowship for an artist with disabilities

Our heartfelt gratitude also goes to:

**CoArc** and most especially **Danielle Palleschi & Beth Marr**.

**Dan Devine**, for being an inspiring presence for the artists and always knowing where to find the crazy things artists may need for their work.

**Ross Willows**, for making the impossible possible and for documenting so wonderfully the every day life of Art Omi.
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Jessica Segall at work in her studio. Photo by Ross Willows