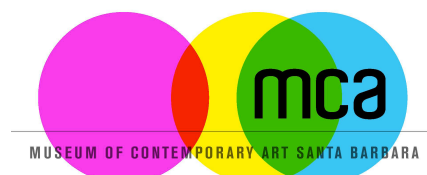


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For Immediate Release.

Exhibitions: **Out of the Great Wide Open** featuring Ryan Bulis, Cathy Ellis, Wendy Osher, Erik Reel, Sommer Roman, Nick Wilkinson, and Seyburn Zorthian; and **Bloom Projects**: Conrad Ruiz, *Knuckles and Bubbles*

Opening Reception: Saturday, January 24, 6–8 pm

Exhibitions on View: January 25 – March 29, 2015

ADMISSION IS FREE

Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB) celebrates all things local with seven regional artists to be featured in the annual **Call For Entries** exhibition, this year titled *Out of the Great Wide Open*. Also on view is new and recent work by Los Angeles-based artist Conrad Ruiz in the next iteration of the cutting-edge **Bloom Projects** series.



From left to right: Nick Wilkinson, *Sleeper Car*, 2014, Acrylic, colored pencil, and spray texture on birch panel, 24 in. x 30 in., Courtesy the Artist; Wendy Osher, *Napkin*, 2012, Discarded packaging, Courtesy the Artist

Call For Entries 2015

Each year, MCASB features the most compelling work by artists living and working on the Central Coast via its acclaimed Tri-County **Call For Entries** exhibition series. **Ryan Bulis** (Santa Barbara), **Cathy Ellis** (Goleta), **Wendy Osher** (Ojai), **Erik Reel** (Ventura), **Sommer Roman** (Santa Barbara), **Nick Wilkinson** (Los Osos), and **Seyburn Zorthian** (Solvang) were selected in Fall 2014 by MCASB's curators and Artist Society members. In a range of artistic mediums that include performance, painting, social practice, and sculpture, this highly anticipated 8th annual exhibition reveals the vibrancy, creativity, and innovative thinking present in our area.

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Brooke Kellaway, MCASB Associate Curator, says, “Not only is this an opportunity to see new and recent work from some of the Tri-County area's most outstanding contemporary artists, but the development of the exhibition brings together in conversation several of these artists who've never yet met, connecting their practices and further strengthening our arts community.”

The Museum will also take this opportunity to shed light on creativity beyond its walls in the Santa Barbara and Tri-County community through diverse collaborations with local trendsetters and tastemakers. Via public programs, tours, and special events (including our popular **Curated Cocktails** series held as part of the Santa Barbara Downtown Organization's First Thursdays), MCASB will enliven deeper engagement with the existing vibrant cultural landscape through support of music, culinary, performing, and visual art and artists.

Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara's exhibition and education programs are generously supported by grants from the Getty Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; Nordstrom; Towbes Foundation; Mosher Foundation in honor of Barry Berkus, recommended by Dr. Bruce McFadden; Ann Jackson Family Foundation; High Tide Foundation; Curator's Council Exhibition and Education Fund; and contributions from our Board of Trustees and many generous individuals. Additional support provided by The James Irvine Foundation and organizational development grant program using funds provided by the City of Santa Barbara in partnership with the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission.

Additional special thanks to: The James Irvine Foundation, San Francisco, CA; Paseo Nuevo Shopping Center, Santa Barbara, CA; *Santa Barbara Independent*, CA; and Wayne McCall & Associates, Santa Barbara, CA.

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From left to right: Conrad Ruiz, *Knuckles*, 2012, Oil on canvas, 20 x 20 in., Courtesy the Artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery; Conrad Ruiz, *Tropical Thunder*, 2014, Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in., Courtesy the Artist and Jessica Silverman Gallery

Bloom Projects: Conrad Ruiz, *Knuckles and Bubbles*

In his large-scale paintings and new explorations in sculpture, Conrad Ruiz (b. 1983, Monterey Park, CA) delves into the concept of machismo. For the past seven years his fantastical works, oscillating between figurative and abstract, have captured freeze-frame instances of stirring sporting events, amusement park thrills, and mass group exercises in attack strategies that often situate the male figure in actions that bolster his heroic status. Ruiz's references to history painting converge with pop culture imagery—drawn from the entertainment industry of Los Angeles where he currently lives—and are interwoven with aspects of his personal experience growing up as a teenager in nearby Hacienda Heights. Says Ruiz in an interview with VICE magazine, “One thing I’m constantly thinking about when I’m making work is the ultimate boy-zone, like comic books, video games, fantasy, and sci-fi.” In so doing, his paintings are imbued with a familiar range of adolescent impulses bound up in ever-complicated politicized issues of sexual identity, body image, competitive drive, and willingness to conform.

The exhibition at MCASB will feature a selection of new and recent paintings from Ruiz's *Juice* series—vibrant sprays and splashes of power drinks—along with a painting and sculpture from the artist's *Abscapes* series. Charged with power and desire, the works, while challenging fraught stereotypes of masculinity, confront a highly mediated range of seductive forces that influence how identity becomes performed in contemporary culture.

Conrad Ruiz received his MFA from the California College of Arts in 2009. He has participated in numerous museum exhibitions in the U.S. and Mexico. Ruiz's work is part of public and private collections that include the Berkeley Art Museum; ArtNow International, San Francisco; and the Peggy Cooper-Cafritz Collection, Washington D.C. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles, CA.

Additional special thanks to: The James Irvine Foundation, San Francisco, CA; Paseo Nuevo Shopping Center, Santa Barbara, CA; *Santa Barbara Independent*, CA; and Wayne McCall & Associates, Santa Barbara, CA.

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About Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara:

The Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara (MCASB) is a non-profit, non-collecting museum dedicated to the exhibition, education, and cultivation of the arts of our time. Formerly Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum (CAF), MCASB is the premier venue for contemporary art between Los Angeles and San Francisco. MCASB is located at the Paseo Nuevo Shopping Center Upper Arts Terrace in downtown Santa Barbara, CA. Visit our second location, MCASB Satellite @ Hotel Indigo Santa Barbara at 121 State Street. Contact MCASB at 805.966.5373, or Hotel Indigo Santa Barbara at 805.966.6586.

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