



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOM SCHIFF: SURROUNDED BY ART

November 22, 2019 – March 1, 2020

Organized by the Contemporary Arts Center; Curated by Raphaela Platow

CINCINNATI, August 2019 — The Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) is honored to announce *Surrounded by Art*, an immersive exhibition by Cincinnati-based photographer Tom Schiff (b. 1947, New York), featuring panoramic views of America’s landmark museums, opening November 22, 2019. This is the first solo exhibition comprised exclusively of the artist’s museum panoramas. It is accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue published by Rizzoli Electa in 2019. In addition, the exhibition includes a VR experience that allows visitors to enter and explore Schiff’s images.

For years Schiff traveled the country capturing dynamic exterior and interior images of various buildings with a particular eye for museums. “His photography—especially in the 360-degree format—is an incredible way to experience the details of museum architecture that you might not otherwise be able to see,” remarked Alice & Harris Weston Director and Chief Curator, Raphaela Platow. “Though viewers won’t get to see a particular exhibition or museum collection, his photographs give an incredible sense of the spaces that house the works of art.” In his selection of museums, Schiff focuses on the architectural significance of the building architecture rather than the artwork on display. The resulting images interpret building designs through elongated and sequenced compositions. Using artistic license as well as a deliberate framing, Schiff turns the museum into a medium. This approach captures the iconic quality of landmark United States museum architecture, while highlighting their connections and idiosyncrasies across time and space.

About Tom Schiff:

Thomas R. Schiff studied photography under Clarence White, Jr. and Arnold Gassan while earning his BA from Ohio University in 1970. A photographer since childhood, he has continued working in various photographic formats for the past forty years. His early photography featured black and white images focused on architectural detail, storefront facades and windows. In 1994, Schiff began working in color panoramic photographs, making use of the Hulcherama 360 panoramic camera. He has published fourteen books: *Panoramic Cincinnati* (1999), *Panoramic Ohio* (2002), *Panoramic Parks* (2005), *Vegas 360°* (2009), *Wright Panorama* (2010), *Prospect* (2012), *Columbus, Indiana* (2013), *Virginia 360°* (2015), *Northern Kentucky University* (2015), *The Library Book* (2017), *Wright in Ohio* (2017), *Cincinnati Panorama* (2017), *The Poetics of Distortion* (2019), and *Surrounded by Art* (2019). Schiff helped establish Images Gallery in Cincinnati in 1980, and in 2010, he cofounded FotoFocus, a non-profit organization created to celebrate and champion photography and lens-based art.

About the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC)

Through exhibitions, performances, and educational and hands-on community programs, the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) provides opportunities for all people to engage with the art, artists, and ideas of our time. With free admission, and working with its community of visitors, patrons, and partners, the CAC explores the unfolding landscape of art and celebrates creative expression in everyone.

Since its founding in 1939, the CAC has been a champion of emerging ideas in contemporary art, hosting one of the first Midwest exhibitions of Picasso's *Guernica* in 1939; mounting an early exhibition of Pop Art in 1963; representing the United States at the São Paulo Biennial in 1975; and presenting—and successfully defending—the 1990 Mapplethorpe retrospective that became a lightning rod in the era's culture wars and propelled the CAC into the national spotlight.

In 2003, the CAC moved into the Lois & Richard Rosenthal Center for Contemporary Art, the first museum designed by architect Zaha Hadid and the first museum in the U.S. to be designed by a woman. Recent programming highlights include landmark exhibitions of work by Ugo Rondinone, Do Ho Suh, Titus Kaphar, Saya Woolfalk, Swoon, and Akram Zaatari, and the first solo museum presentations of artists such as Maria Lassnig, Shilpa Gupta, JR, Anri Sala, Michael Sailstorfer, Pia Camil, Albano Afonso, and Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum. The CAC also launched an ongoing performance program in 2011, which is now accompanied by the *This Time Tomorrow* annual performance festival. Artists presented include Okwui Okpokwasili, Taylor Mac, Kaneza Schaal, and Tanya Tagaq, with North American premieres from international artists such as Kate McIntosh, Ingri Fiksdal, Mithkal Alzghair, and Raquel André.

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