

wexner center for the arts
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Director's Dialogue on Art and Social Change



Climate and Culture

David Buckland
Mitch Epstein
Paul D. Miller
Alexis Rockman
Lonnie Thompson
Edwina von Gal

WED, MAR 31 | 7 PM
Film/Video Theater

“Science doesn’t cause climate change.... It’s a cultural subject, and that’s why it’s legitimate for the artists to get involved.”

—DAVID BUCKLAND

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At this year’s Director’s Dialogue, artists and scientists talk about how they can—and are—working together to call attention to the growing threat of climate change and to find new and innovative ways of sharing information with the public. The panel brings together six individuals who are deeply engaged in this work for a dialogue on one of the most pertinent and pervasive issues facing contemporary society.

The Wexner Center’s annual Director’s Dialogue is made possible in part by a lead endowment gift from an anonymous donor.

This year’s program is cosponsored by Ohio State’s Byrd Polar Research Center, in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

Our thanks to Ohio State’s Office for Disability Services for providing American Sign Language interpretation for tonight’s program.

PANELISTS

David Buckland founded the Cape Farewell project in 2001. Since then, he has led seven expeditions of artists, scientists, and educators into the high arctic—and one to Peru—to see the effects of climate change firsthand. Past participants include artist and musician Laurie Anderson, artist Rachel Whiteread, singer/songwriter Feist, and novelists Ian McEwan (*Atonement*) and Vikram Seth (*A Suitable Boy*). Buckland is a designer, artist, and filmmaker whose works have been exhibited in numerous galleries and museums around the world. In 1999, he presented a solo exhibition of portraits of performers at London's National Portrait Gallery.

Mitch Epstein's photographs are in numerous major museum collections. His eighth and most recent book, *American Power*, published in 2009, examines the production and consumption of energy in the U.S. and the impact of those processes on the American landscape. Images from the series will soon be visible on billboards around Columbus, New York, and Washington, D.C., as the *What Is American Power* project. Epstein is the recipient of the 2008 Berlin Prize in Arts and Letters, the Kraszna-Krausz Photography Book Award in 2004, and a 2002 Guggenheim Fellowship.

Paul D. Miller, aka DJ Spooky, is a writer, artist, and musician. He is the author of two books on the culture of music sampling and remixing: *Rhythm Science* (2005) and *Sound Unbound* (2008). He has performed and exhibited at museums and biennials internationally. His collaborative partners have included Chuck D and Yoko Ono. His recent work *Terra Nova: Sinfonia Antarctica* captures an "acoustic portrait" of that changing continent, utilizing "field recordings" he made of Antarctic ice forms during travels there in December 2007 and January 2008.

Alexis Rockman's paintings present visually rich, but often disconcerting, visions of the natural world, past, present, and future. Always informed by extensive research, his past projects include *Manifest Destiny*, a panoramic mural painting that depicts the Brooklyn waterfront as it might appear in 5004, submerged in the rising seas brought about by global warming. A gigantic reproduction of the mural was on view at the Wexner Center in 2004. The first major survey of Rockman's work will open at the Smithsonian American Art Museum this November.

Lonnie Thompson is a Distinguished University Professor in Ohio State's School of Earth Sciences and a Research Scientist at the Byrd Polar Research Center. His field observations and research on deep ice core samples have provided clear evidence that the warming of the last 50 years is now outside the range of climate variability for at least several millennia. Thompson has been recognized with many awards including the National Medal of Science and the Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement. He was also one of the leading scientific advisers for the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*.

Edwina von Gal is an award-winning landscape architect whose work has increasingly focused on issues of sustainability. Her clients have included Calvin Klein, Richard Serra, and Maya Lin, for whom she consulted on the 2008 sculpture *Storm King Wavefield*. In 2002, architect Frank Gehry hired her to design the park land surrounding BioMuseo, a biodiversity museum he was building in Panama. She became so interested in the fragile landscape there that she founded a land stewardship program, the Azuero Earth Project, to preserve and restore one of the last remaining dry tropical forests.

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