

**wexner center**  
for the arts

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**ART MEETS SCIENCE IN MURALS BY ALEXIS ROCKMAN**

*ARTIST TO GIVE PUBLIC TALK AND WORK WITH STUDENTS WHILE IN TOWN*

***“Alexis Rockman paints like Rembrandt and thinks like Darwin. He doesn’t just make art—he remakes natural history.”—Wired Magazine***

Two vividly colorful murals by New York-based **Alexis Rockman**, an acclaimed artist whose work falls at the crossroads of art and science, will be on view in the Wexner Center’s lower lobby and Café from **September 2004 through fall 2005**. The works—reproductions of the paintings ***Manifest Destiny*** and ***Evolution***—explore such issues as global warming, genetic manipulation, and environmental destruction in a style that is at once beautiful, disturbing, and darkly humorous. Both pieces have been reproduced onto a vinyl canvas material.

An 8- by 24-foot mural depicting a post-apocalyptic Brooklyn 3,000 years from now, ***Manifest Destiny*** (2004) envisions a world wracked by ecological disaster which results in the borough becoming a vast floodplain, with landmarks such as the Brooklyn Bridge destroyed and submerged by water. The expansive piece plays host to a new geology of mutated animals and plants. Originally commissioned by the Brooklyn Museum as part of the opening celebration for its new entrance pavilion this spring, ***Manifest Destiny*** was praised by *The New York Times* as a work that “can barely contain its subject.” This is the first time ***Manifest Destiny*** has been shown outside of New York.

In ***Evolution*** (1992), Rockman creates a startling panorama of a world adrift in a primordial ooze lorded over by a volcano. The piece features illustrations of half man/half woman creatures cavorting, killing, flying, and dying, and more than 200 other depictions of real and imagined species of plants, animals, and insects. It also features such iconic pop culture images as the face-hugging monster from the film *Alien*.

At the Wexner Center, ***Manifest Destiny*** will be located on a large wall in the café area; ***Evolution*** will be wrapped around the curved wall at the bottom of the main stairs. The works will be on view during regular building hours: Monday–Friday, 8 am–6 pm and Sunday noon–6 pm (later hours during evening events). **Admission is free.**

## **RELATED EVENTS AND PROGRAMS**

**An Evening with Alexis Rockman** will be held **Wednesday, October 6**. This free public event will include an artist's talk by Rockman **at 6 pm** in the Film/Video Theater, followed by a book signing and a reception with snacks, music, and a cash bar in the lower lobby.

An innovative interdisciplinary course for high school students this fall called **Art & the Environment** revolves around Rockman's work and will involve interaction among Rockman, other visiting artists, students, and Ohio State University faculty in a variety of disciplines.

## **ALEXIS ROCKMAN**

Rockman, 41, is perhaps the only artist who can number among his fans botanists, ichthyologists, and artists. A former illustrator for *Natural History* magazine, Rockman draws upon years of extensive research with experts from NASA to the American Museum of Natural History, and through his own field experience in the remote rainforests of Guyana.

After spending years traveling with his archaeologist mother, Rockman studied at the Rhode Island School of Design and The School of Visual Arts in New York. His work has been shown at the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and The Baltimore Museum of Art. Along the way he has collected such fans as the late Stephen Jay Gould, who once said that "he tweaks my cerebrum."

## **EXHIBITION SUPPORT**

The exhibition was organized by the **Wexner Center for the Arts**.

It is presented with support from the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation**.

## **WEXNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art. Through exhibitions, screenings, performances, artist residencies, and educational programs, the Wexner Center acts as a forum where established and emerging artists can test ideas and where diverse audiences can participate in cultural experiences that enhance understanding of the art of our time. In its programs, the Wexner Center balances a commitment to experimentation with a commitment to traditions of innovation and affirms the university's mission of education, research, and community service.