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EAR TO THE GROUND

Earth and Element in Contemporary Art at NOMA

NEW ORLEANS, LA – The New Orleans Museum of Art (NOMA) presents *Ear to the Ground: Earth and Element in Contemporary Art*, on view now through August 31, 2019. Working with natural elements like earth, wind, water and fire, the artists featured in the group exhibition show how nature can spur artistic innovation and spark new thinking about human culture and community. Drawn predominantly from NOMA’s permanent collection, *Ear to the Ground* features works by 18 artists across vastly different media, cultures and time periods which each reference earth and element in very different ways.

“Using earth both as a material and an inspiration, the artists in this exhibition treat nature as a metaphor for the complexities of contemporary cultural life,” said Susan Taylor, NOMA’s Montine McDaniel Freeman Director. “Their art envisions new ways we might relate to the natural world, as well as to one another.”

Artists featured in *Ear to the Ground* include Dan Alley, Lynda Benglis, Diedrick Brackens, Edward Burtynsky, Chandra McCormick, Clyde Connell, Dawn DeDeaux, Courtney Egan, Olafur Eliasson, Jorge Otero Escobar, Mikhail Karikis, Ronald Lockett, Sara Madandar, Cristina Molina, Jennifer Odem, Bosco Sodi, Pat Steir, and Christopher Wilmarth. While some make materials like dirt and mud their primary medium, some turn to nature as a collaborator or conspirator in the creation of their art, casting sculptures directly upon the ground, or dyeing textiles with water drawn from rivers and oceans. Other featured artists reference natural processes like weathering, disintegration and sedimentation to address current social and political issues ranging from climate change to questions surrounding immigration and cultural belonging.

Exhibition Programming

At select intervals throughout the run of *Ear to the Ground*, the New Orleans-based artist Cristina Molina will perform *Under Three Things*, a new performance work in which she will offer intimate guided whispering tours of the exhibition to museum visitors. Drawing upon cultural mythologies of the underworld, Molina will assume the perspective of the earth, personified, offering a unique experience of the exhibition in which the different artworks in the show constitute the topography of an imagined underground landscape.

Additional Information

[Press-approved images are available here.](#)

Facebook and Instagram: @noma1910

Hashtag: #nomaearthtotheground

Website: www.noma.org

NOMA

About NOMA and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden

The New Orleans Museum of Art, founded in 1910 by Isaac Delgado, houses more than 40,000 art objects encompassing 5,000 years of world art. Works from the permanent collection, along with continuously changing special exhibitions, are on view in the museum's 46 galleries Fridays from 10AM to 9PM; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10AM to 6PM; Saturdays from 10AM to 5PM and Sundays from 11AM to 5PM. NOMA offers docent-guided tours at 1PM every Tuesday - Sunday. The adjoining Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden features work by over 60 artists, including several of the 20th century's master sculptors. The Sculpture Garden is open seven days a week: 9AM to 6PM. The New Orleans Museum of Art and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden are fully accessible to handicapped visitors and wheelchairs are available from the front desk. For more information about NOMA, call (504) 658-4100 or visit www.noma.org. Museum admission is free on Wednesdays for Louisiana residents, courtesy of The Helis Foundation. Teenagers (ages 13-19) receive free admission every day through the end of the year, courtesy of The Helis Foundation.

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