

MATTHEW BARNEY: REDOUBT

Yale University Art Gallery announces exhibition and publication of latest work by renowned contemporary artist Matthew Barney

March 1–June 16, 2019



Matthew Barney, *Redoubt*, 2018. Production still. © Matthew Barney, courtesy Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels, and Sadie Coles HQ, London. Photo: Hugo Glendinning

New Haven, Conn., November 15, 2018—The Yale University Art Gallery is pleased to announce *Matthew Barney: Redoubt*, an exhibition of the renowned contemporary artist's latest body of work (2016–19). The exhibition includes an eponymous two-hour film that traces the story of a wolf hunt in Idaho's Sawtooth Mountain range, intertwining the theme of the hunt with those of mythology and artistic creation. Also featured are four monumental sculptures, more than forty engravings and electroplated copper plates, and an artist-conceived catalogue. This is the

artist's first major exhibition at his alma mater (Barney studied art at Yale, receiving his B.A. in 1989). *Matthew Barney: Redoubt* will be on view from March 1 to June 16, 2019.

Matthew Barney: Redoubt is Barney's first solo museum exhibition in the U.S. since the presentation of *River of Fundament* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, in 2015–16. The new artworks in *Redoubt* continue the artist's notable shift in materials over the past decade, from the plastic and petroleum jelly of his early works to the cast metals that figured prominently in *River of Fundament*. With *Redoubt*, Barney has combined traditional casting methods and new digital technologies with unprecedented techniques to create artworks of formal and material complexity as well as narrative density. The four monumental sculptures in the exhibition, for instance, derive from trees harvested from a burned forest in the Sawtooth Mountains. Molten copper and brass were poured through the trees, creating a unique cast of the core as the metal flowed inside. Each sculpture is a literal vestige of Idaho, with the remains of the tree being subsumed into the artwork.

The exhibition also includes engravings on copper plate that Barney made during the filming of *Redoubt* as well as a series of electroplated copper reliefs that feature imagery from the film, such as the landscape of the Sawtooth Mountains or a wolf among the trees. The electroplates were made using a technique that Barney developed during production of the film, which he then refined and expanded in the studio. In this experimental method, an image was engraved into a copper plate coated with asphalt. The plate was immersed in an acid and copper solution and was subjected to an electrical current, causing copper growths to form out of the engraved lines. By altering the conditions in the electroplating tank—including current, heat, and chemical concentrations—the artist

produced unique variations on each image. On the plates that were left longest in the electroplating bath, the copper accretions overtake the drawing, transforming the engravings into abstract reliefs and almost completely obscuring the image.

Redoubt was filmed in Idaho's rugged Sawtooth Mountains and continues Barney's long-standing preoccupation with landscape as both a setting and subject in his films. By layering classical, cosmological, and American myths about humanity's place in the natural world, *Redoubt* forms a complex portrait of the central Idaho region. Like most of Barney's previous films, *Redoubt* is without dialogue; but in a marked shift, Barney has more fully incorporated dance into the narrative of the film, allowing the characters to communicate choreographically. Throughout the film, the characters' movements are formalized into choreographies that echo, foreshadow, and interpret their encounters with wildlife. Eleanor Bauer, who also worked with Barney on *River of Fundament*, both performed in and choreographed *Redoubt*, in collaboration with K. J. Holmes, Sandra Lamouche, and Laura Stokes. All of the dance passages were filmed on location, and the relationship between site and movement is a recurring theme.

Structured as a series of six hunts that unfold over seven days and nights, *Redoubt* loosely adapts the myth of Diana, goddess of the hunt, and Actaeon, a hunter who accidentally trespasses on her and is punished. The Diana of *Redoubt* (Anette Wachter) is both the protector of the natural world and a predator in it—a present-day sharpshooter in the frigid Idaho wilderness. Accompanied by her attendants, the Calling Virgin (Eleanor Bauer) and the Tracking Virgin (Laura Stokes), Diana traverses the mountainous terrain in pursuit of the elusive wolf. The Engraver (Matthew Barney) happens upon the hunting outfit in the forest and begins stalking the trio, furtively documenting their actions in a series of copper engravings. He brings his plates to a remote trailer housing a rudimentary laboratory, where the Electroplater (K. J. Holmes) subjects them to an electrochemical transformation. In a pivotal scene near the end of the film, the Engraver encounters a sixth character, the Hoop Dancer (Sandra Lamouche, Bigstone Cree Nation), who rehearses a Native American dance in a nearby town. Her complex movement sequence unites her with the other characters across time and space, as the film progresses to a climactic moment of cosmic and terrestrial reversal.

Barney is among the most ambitious and provocative artists of our time, known for epic projects such as the *CREMASTER Cycle* (1994–2002). Both *Redoubt* and its related publication—which features essays by leading scholars of art history, dance theory, and environmental studies—speak to the artist's expansive interests. Exhibition curator Pamela Franks, Class of 1956 Director at the Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts, and former Senior Deputy Director and Seymour H. Knox, Jr., Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Gallery, says, "Barney's intellectual and aesthetic frames of reference are wide-ranging: classical mythology as well as myths



Matthew Barney, *Diana on Shooting Bench*, 2018. Electroplated copper plate with cast copper stand. © Matthew Barney, courtesy Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels

of the American West, modern choreography as well as contemporary Native American hoop dance, environmental science as well as wildlife biology, art history, cosmology, electrochemistry, and alchemy. The artist is equally adventurous in his approaches to materials and art making, with both casting and electroplating methods newly invented for *Redoubt*.”

Having spent little time at Yale since he was an undergraduate, Barney made several trips to campus while working on *Redoubt*. During these visits, he explored the Payne Whitney Gymnasium to find the site of a seminal performance piece he did while a student; studied American landscape paintings in the Gallery’s collection; toured the celebrated architecture of the Beinecke Rare Book



Matthew Barney, *Redoubt*, 2018. Production still. © Matthew Barney, courtesy Gladstone Gallery, New York and Brussels, and Sadie Coles HQ, London. Photo: Hugo Glendinning

and Manuscript Library and the ruins of New Haven’s Winchester Arms Factory; delved into the collections of the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History; and discussed topics ranging from the art-historical landscape tradition to metallurgy to wolves with both curators and faculty.

“Projects like *Redoubt* are truly thrilling from the Gallery’s perspective,” states Stephanie Wiles, the museum’s Henry J. Heinz II Director. “To have a contemporary artist and Yale alumnus of Barney’s extraordinary talent mine the University’s collections and intellectual resources,

including staff and faculty, for such a captivating and compelling project speaks to the power of art to transcend disciplines and boundaries. The Gallery is honored to present *Redoubt* to the public, and we eagerly anticipate the interdisciplinary fruits of this exhibition and publication.”

Related Publication

The related catalogue, which will be published by the Gallery and distributed by Yale University Press, is a comprehensive representation of the project, using hundreds of stills and documentary photographs to track the film’s narrative. The publication also features lush images of the engravings, electroplated copper plates, and tree sculptures related to the project, as well as other images that inspired *Redoubt*. The volume is organized into six chapters mirroring the “hunt” structure of the film. Included are an introduction, a historical essay originally published in *National Geographic* in 1899 that discusses the relationship among forests, forest fires, and regrowth, and six essays—some lyrical, others more objective—that approach *Redoubt* through the disciplinary lenses of art history, ecology, and dance theory. Taking a cue from *Redoubt*’s mountainous setting, the overall design of the book evokes a field guide.

372 pages / 6½ × 9½ inches / 402 color and 15 black-and-white illustrations, including 2 gatefolds /
Distributed by Yale University Press / 2019 / Paperback / ISBN 978-0-300-24327-7 / Price \$50;
Members \$40

On View

Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Conn.

March 1-June 16, 2019

UCCA, Beijing

Opens fall 2019; dates to be announced

Exhibition Credits

Exhibition made possible by the Janet and Simeon Bragun Fund and the Robert Lehman, B.A. 1913, Endowment Fund. Organized by Pamela Franks, Class of 1956 Director, Williams College Museum of Art, Williamstown, Massachusetts, and former Senior Deputy Director and Seymour H. Knox, Jr., Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, Yale University Art Gallery.

Film Screenings and Related Programs

The film will be screened in the Gallery's Robert L. McNeil, Jr., Lecture Hall. Please visit artgallery.yale.edu for dates and times of the film screenings and additional related programming.

Special Note

All hunting scenes in *Redoubt* were staged using special effects. Trained animals were provided by professional handlers, who monitored their safety and the conditions on set. Wild animals were filmed in their natural habitats.

Film Credits

Written and directed by Matthew Barney

Produced by Matthew Barney, Sadie Coles, and Barbara Gladstone

Director of Photography: Peter Strietmann

Music composed by Jonathan Bepler

Editor: Katharine McQuerrey

Producer: Mike Bellon

Production Design: Kanoa Baysa

Art Direction: Jade Archuleta-Gans

Diana: Anette Wachter

Calling Virgin: Eleanor Bauer

Tracking Virgin: Laura Stokes

Electroplater: K. J. Holmes

Engraver: Matthew Barney

Hoop Dancer: Sandra Lamouche

Choreographer: Eleanor Bauer

Additional choreography by Laura Stokes, K. J. Holmes, and Sandra Lamouche

Yale University Art Gallery

The Yale University Art Gallery, the oldest college art museum in the United States, was founded in 1832 when the patriot-artist John Trumbull gave more than 100 of his paintings to Yale College. Since then its collections have grown to more than 250,000 objects ranging in date from ancient times to the present.

General Information

The Yale University Art Gallery is located at 1111 Chapel Street, New Haven, Connecticut. Museum hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 am-5 pm; Thursday until 8 pm (September-June); and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am-5 pm. The Gallery is closed Mondays and major holidays. Free and open to the public. For general information, please call 203.432.0600 or visit the website at artgallery.yale.edu.

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