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Wafaa Bilal (b. 1966, Najaf, Iraq), Rendering of *Canto III*, 2023. © Wafaa Bilal. Courtesy of the artist.

Multimedia Material:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/tguz08gio4h41kqgxznkc/AE8ASckndZp0TmSXx8SoRdQ?rlkey=bnieg9thk0yezv5lnatgmv1of&st=ijbhwdne&dl=0>

MCA Chicago announces new Project and Collections Exhibitions, including Dieter Roth piece and first Wafaa Bilal survey

CHICAGO—The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago today announces its Project and Collections exhibition preview. Upcoming exhibitions include [*Wafaa Bilal: Indulge Me*](#), Bilal's first museum survey; *Dieter Roth and Björn Roth: Balabild 5*, a joint father-son piece from the D.Daskalopoulos Collection; and [*City in a Garden: Queer Art and Activism in Chicago*](#), a group show that underscores Chicago's role in the fostering of queer art and activism. More exhibitions will be announced in the upcoming winter season.

Project and Collections Exhibitions

Dieter Roth and Björn Roth: Balabild 5

December 21, 2024–July 6, 2025
McCormick Tribune Gallery

Balabild 5 is a portrait of the Roths' artistic practice and creative life in Bala, Iceland, made of materials including canvas, paint tubes, brushes, lightbulbs, photographs, and other items from their shared home studio. These items are glued together, tied with wire, and vertically cascade from nine feet high to form the artwork. A painting hangs at the center of the piece, buried by the tools and materials needed to create it. The studio's own wooden floor, cut out from its original location in Iceland, serves as the sculpture's pedestal.

Over decades, the Roths have continuously developed *Balabild* (which translates to "Bala Picture"), leaving traces of dinner parties, music making, and grandchildren's creative play within the artwork. *Balabild 5* is supposed to look forever unfinished, capturing the energy of the studio frozen in time—as if the artists could step in at any moment to keep working. Dieter Roth used this work to challenge traditions of authorship, artmaking, and biography by allowing *Balabild 5* to be expanded by his family after his death. The Roths' studio sculptures are exceptionally rare in US museum collections and the MCA is thrilled to showcase this artwork, which exemplifies the beauty of the family's combined artistic practice, for a limited time.

Balabild 5 is jointly owned by the MCA Chicago and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum as a part of the D.Daskalopoulos Collection Gift.

Dieter Roth and Björn Roth: *Balabild 5* is curated by Jason Foumberg, Daskalopoulos Collection Manager.

[Wafaa Bilal: Indulge Me](#)

February 1–October 19, 2025
Bergman Galleries

Wafaa Bilal: Indulge Me is the first major museum survey of renowned artist Wafaa Bilal (b. 1966, Najaf, Iraq; lives in New York, NY). The exhibition examines Bilal's interdisciplinary practice, highlighting the development of his work across decades and placing it in conversation with broader art histories. A theme running throughout the exhibition is cultural cannibalism—that is, how culture (in particular the culture of the other) can be used, disassembled, and consumed.

The exhibition is organized into four immersive sections, each of which focuses on a major work from Bilal's practice. Artworks on display include a reconstruction of a room in Chicago's FlatFile Gallery that the artist confined himself and allowed online audiences to target him with a paintball gun during a month-long performance, *Domestic Tension* (2007); a large-scale, projection video displaying images from Bilal's year-long performance *3rdi* (2010–11); *Thumbsat Model* (2024), which comprises a 1-inch golden bust of Saddam Hussein fixed to a satellite and launched into Earth's orbit as part of the exhibition; and a commissioned work *Lamassu (In a Grain of Wheat)* (2025), Bilal's response to ISIS's destruction of the Winged Bull of Nineveh sculpture, or lamassu, in 2015.

Whether using his own body to interrogate notions of power or leveraging innovative technologies to rectify acts of cultural destruction, Bilal shows us what it means to consciously engage across cultures while highlighting negative global implications of consumption, exploitation, and profiteering.

Wafaa Bilal: Indulge Me is organized by Bana Kattan, Pamela Alper Associate Curator, with Iris Colburn, Curatorial Associate.

[Pipilotti Rist: Supersubjektiv](#)

February 22–September 24, 2025
Turner Gallery

This exhibition focuses on a single artwork by Pipilotti Rist (b. 1962 in Grabs, Switzerland; lives and works in Zürich), the 2001 video installation *Supersubjektiv*. In the artwork, Rist takes digital camcorder footage she filmed during a month-long trip to Japan and morphs it into a dream-like space for contemplation and curiosity, pairing the hallucinatory video with an artist-made pillow and sheepskin seating. The artwork examines nature, the built environment, and technology with wide-eyed wonder, accompanied by an ambient electronic soundtrack. While in the gallery, visitors are encouraged to relax during their viewing and listen to the video's accompanying soundtrack, which conveys Rist's longing for connection in our vast, globalized society through lyrics in English and Japanese.

Supersubjektiv is a part of the D.Daskalopoulos Collection Gift, which was jointly donated to the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 2022.

Pipilotti Rist: Supersubjektiv is curated by Jason Foubberg, Daskalopoulos Collection Manager.

[City in a Garden: Queer Art and Activism in Chicago](#)

July 5, 2025–January 25, 2026
Sylvia Neil and Daniel Fischel Galleries

City in a Garden: Queer Art and Activism in Chicago highlights Chicago's essential, yet often overlooked, role in the stories of queer art and activism. The exhibition examines this history beginning in the mid-1980s, when activists radically mobilized in response to the US government's disastrous handling of the AIDS crisis and reclaimed the historically pejorative epithet "queer" as a liberatory term encompassing all who purposefully deviate from heteronormative society. With works drawn from the MCA Collection and other local collections, the exhibition features over thirty artists and collectives working in Chicago from the 1980s to the present. These artists address queerness and related topics through diverse media and methods—including social documentary photography of clandestine queer spaces; craft-informed sculpture that challenges normative depictions of gender and sexuality; drawings, paintings, and videos that explore queer intimacy; archival materials related to groups who innovatively combine artistic and activist strategies; and more.

The exhibition's title is based on Chicago's official motto—*urbs in horto*—meaning "city in a garden." In the context of this presentation, the title speaks to the exhibited artists' and activists' utopian visions of a metropolitan sanctuary for people of all races, genders, and sexualities. These visions remain pointedly urgent, as queer people continue to fight for their lives and livelihoods under ongoing and renewed political threats.

City in a Garden: Queer Art and Activism in Chicago is organized by Jack Schneider, Assistant Curator.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CHICAGO

The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The MCA interweaves exhibitions, performances, collections, and educational programs while providing a place for audiences to contemplate and discuss contemporary art in pursuit of a creative and diverse future. The MCA believes in the values of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) as a platform to enact structural change. The museum is generously supported by its Board of Trustees; individual and corporate members; private and corporate foundations, including the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; and government agencies. Museum capital improvements are supported by a Public Museum

Capital Grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The MCA is a proud member of Museums in the Park and receives major support from the Chicago Park District.

The [MCA is located at 220 E. Chicago Avenue](#) and is open 10 am to 5 pm Wednesday to Sunday and Tuesdays (free for IL residents) from 10 am to 9 pm. The museum is closed on Mondays. Admission is free for all youth 18 and under, members of the military and veterans, and MCA members. Find more information about MCA's exhibitions, programs, and special events at mcachicago.org or at 312.280.2660. or at 312.280.2660.



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