

*For immediate release*

## Calling all crafters

Tang Teaching Museum invites the public to help create the  
‘Saratoga Springs Satellite Reef’

SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY (January 21, 2021)  
— The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College invites the public to contribute to the *Saratoga Springs Satellite Reef*, a community-created coral reef composed of hundreds of crocheted specimens that will go on view as part of the exhibition *Radical Fiber: Threads Connecting Art and Science*, which opens about a year from now in early 2022.



*Crochet Coral Reef* workshop at the Van AbbeMuseum, Eindhoven, the Netherlands. Photo courtesy VAM and the Institute For Figuring.

For the *Saratoga Springs Satellite Reef*, anyone can participate by crocheting structures with coral-like ruffles, which represent hyperbolic geometry, an area of mathematics. The *Satellite Reef* is part of the worldwide *Crochet Coral Reef* project by Christine and Margaret Wertheim and the Institute For Figuring. The project draws on the long historical connections, especially in the United States, between fiber practice and community building and will connect hobby crafters, art professionals, and novice crocheters from Skidmore, Saratoga Springs, and global communities. [Download the PDF brochure How to Crochet Hyperbolic Corals, which includes patterns for a variety of corals.](#)

In the spirit of community and craft circles, the Museum is offering a series of monthly workshops and weekly drop-in sessions for crafters of all skill levels, from novice to advanced. Participants are encouraged to craft, but anyone is welcome to join to listen and learn. Any style, material, or color of yarn can be used, and creativity and experimentation are encouraged! If you are brand-new to crochet, we recommend purchasing medium-weight (4) yarn and a 4–5.5mm (G/6, H/8, or I/9) crochet hook.

The monthly workshops will include breakout rooms with crochet instructors, who will lead beginners in the single crochet stitch, which is all you need to make your very own coral. Each workshop begins at 7 p.m. and will be on the following Tuesdays: February 9, March 16, April 13, and May 4. Registration for the workshops, to be conducted via Zoom, are available on the Tang website at <http://tang.skidmore.edu>.

The drop-in sessions will be a chance to connect, chat, and learn more about the project with *Radical Fiber* curator Rebecca McNamara. These 30-minute sessions will be Wednesdays at noon from February 10 through May 11. Zoom links to the drop-in sessions will be available on the Tang website at <http://tang.skidmore.edu>.

Once participants complete their creations, they can mail them with their name and email address and phone number to: Elizabeth Karp, Senior Museum Registrar, Tang Teaching Museum, Skidmore College, 815 N. Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Participants' corals will be brought together to create the *Saratoga Springs Satellite Reef*, which is slated to go on view starting January 29, 2022, as part of the exhibition *Radical Fiber: Threads Connecting Art and Science*. Through contemporary art by a diverse group of intergenerational artists working in weaving, quilting, needlework, crochet, knitting, dyeing, and other fiber-based practices, the exhibition demonstrates how fiber practice has influenced mathematics, science, and technology. The exhibition foregrounds each work as at once fine art, process-driven craft, and scientific tool, complicating existing frameworks across fields.

The Zoom events are free and open to the public. For more information, visit <http://tang.skidmore.edu> or email [tang@skidmore.edu](mailto:tang@skidmore.edu).

### **About the Crochet Coral Reef**

The *Crochet Coral Reef* is project created by sisters Christine Wertheim and Margaret Wertheim of the Institute For Figuring. Residing at the intersection of mathematics, marine biology, handicraft, and community art practice, the project responds to the environmental crisis of global warming and the escalating problem of oceanic plastic trash by highlighting not only the damage humans do to earth's ecology, but also our power for positive action. The Wertheims' *Crochet Coral Reef* collection has been exhibited worldwide, including at the 2019 Venice Biennale, Andy Warhol Museum (Pittsburgh), Hayward Gallery (London), Science Gallery (Dublin), and the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History (Washington, DC). The project also encompasses a community-art program in which more than 10,000 people around the world have participated in making more than 40 locally based *Satellite Reefs*—in New York, Chicago,

Melbourne, Ireland, Latvia, UAE, and elsewhere. The *Saratoga Springs Satellite Reef* is the latest addition to this ever-evolving wooly archipelago.

### **About the Artists**

Margaret Wertheim is a science writer, artist, and author of books on the cultural history of physics. Christine Wertheim is an experimental poet, performer, artist, and writer, and a faculty member at the California Institute of the Arts. Margaret and Christine conduct the *Crochet Coral Reef* project through their Los Angeles-based practice, the Institute For Figuring, which is dedicated to “the poetic dimensions of science and mathematics.” The IFF is at once an art endeavor and a framework for innovative public science engagement.

### **About the Tang Teaching Museum**

The Tang Teaching Museum at Skidmore College is a pioneer of interdisciplinary exploration and learning. A cultural anchor of New York’s Capital Region, the Tang’s approach has become a model for college and university art museums across the country—with exhibition programs that bring together visual and performing arts with interdisciplinary ideas from history, economics, biology, dance, and physics, to name just a few. The Tang has one of the most rigorous faculty-engagement initiatives in the nation, and a robust publication and touring exhibition program that extends the museum’s reach far beyond its walls. The Tang Teaching Museum’s award-winning building, designed by architect Antoine Predock, serves as a visual metaphor for the convergence of art and ideas. The Tang building is closed to the public, due to the pandemic, but is open online. For updates, please visit <http://tang.skidmore.edu>.

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