

**THE MENIL COLLECTION APPOINTS
IRENE MEI ZHI SHUM AND NATALIE DUPÊCHER**

Shum named Associate Curator of Contemporary Art

Dupêcher named Assistant Curator of Modern Art

HOUSTON, TEXAS, March 27, 2018 – The Menil Collection is pleased to announce the appointments of Irene Mei Zhi Shum as Associate Curator of Contemporary Art and Natalie Dupêcher as Assistant Curator of Modern Art. They will begin their appointments in summer 2018. Both positions report to Senior Curator Michelle White, who has reorganized the museum’s approach to its modern and contemporary collection with an eye to collection-based research, rotating installations drawn from the permanent collection, and the development of special loan exhibitions.



Since 2007, Irene Mei Zhi Shum has served as the inaugural curator and collections manager for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Philip Johnson Glass House, New Canaan, CT. Prior to the site’s public opening, Shum coordinated the transfer of property from the Estates of Philip Johnson and David Whitney to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. She shaped the Glass House Collection and implemented Glass House’s arts initiative, introducing temporary exhibitions, music, and dance performances. Most notably, she organized large-scale, site-specific exhibitions *Fujiko Nakaya: Veil* (2014) and *Yayoi Kusama: Narcissus Garden* (2016). She has worked closely with artists such as Frank Stella, Isa Genzken, Bruce Nauman, Julian Schnabel, and Ryuichi Sakamoto & Alva Noto, among others. Previously she served as a curatorial assistant in the Department of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, where she organized the museum’s first survey of landscape architecture, *Groundswell: Constructing the Contemporary Landscape* (2005). Shum holds a Master’s in Architecture from Yale University, a certificate of architecture from the École des Beaux-Arts of the Ecoles d’Art Américaines de Fontainebleau, and Bachelor of Arts degrees in Architecture and Art History from Barnard College, Columbia University.



Natalie Dupêcher is a doctoral candidate at Princeton University, where she is writing her dissertation on the German artist Hans Bellmer (1902-1975). She holds a Master's degree in the History of Art from Williams College and Bachelor of Arts degrees in Art History and Romance Languages from New York University. Among her numerous research and teaching fellowships, Dupêcher served as the Museum Research Consortium Fellow, Department of Painting and Sculpture, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, where she contributed to the exhibition *Francis Picabia: Our Heads Are Round so Our Thoughts Can Change Direction* (2016).

Menil Collection Director Rebecca Rabinow said, "We are delighted to welcome Irene Mei Zhi Shum and Natalie Dupêcher to the Menil Collection. This is a particularly exciting time to join the institution as we prepare to reopen our main museum building in autumn 2018 with a refreshed focus on our permanent collection. Irene and Natalie bring important expertise that will illuminate the Menil's holdings of modern and contemporary art and will further the Menil's longstanding commitment to living artists."

About the Menil Collection

A legacy of the philanthropists John and Dominique de Menil, the Menil Collection opened in Houston, Texas in 1987. The museum presents regular rotations of artworks from its growing permanent collection, organizes special exhibitions and programs, publishes scholarly books, and conducts research into the conservation of modern and contemporary art. The Menil Collection's main art building, the first United States museum designed by Renzo Piano, is currently undergoing renovation. For one year after it reopens to the public in autumn 2018, the building will host rotating displays drawn entirely from the permanent collection, including a series of exhibitions devoted to recent acquisitions of work by living artists. The Menil's parklike 30-acre neighborhood includes the Cy Twombly Gallery, a site-specific Dan Flavin installation, the Byzantine Fresco Chapel—now a venue for long-term installations by contemporary artists—and outdoor sculpture. The new Menil Drawing Institute, anticipated to open later this year, will be the first freestanding facility in the United States designed expressly for the exhibition and study of modern and contemporary drawings. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and charges no admission fee.

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Images: Irene Mei Zhi Shum. Photo courtesy The Menil Collection, Houston.; Natalie Dupêcher.
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