

For Immediate Release



UCR ARTSblock presents the exhibition

***Geographies of Detention:
From Guantánamo to the Golden Gulag***

June 1–September 7, 2013*
California Museum of Photography, UCR ARTSblock

RIVERSIDE, Calif., March 18, 2013 – UCR ARTSblock presents ***Geographies of Detention: From Guantánamo to the Golden Gulag***, on view at the California Museum of Photography from June 1 through September 7, 2013. The exhibition is guest curated by Catherine Gudis, Molly McGarry, and graduate students from the UCR Public History Program: Leann Do, Jay Hartzell, Kristen Hayashi, Corinne Knight, Sean Milanovich, Karen Raines, Carolyn Schutten, Megan Suster, Jennifer Thornton, and David Wagner.

Presented on two floors of the California Museum of Photography, *Geographies of Detention* offers a nuanced investigation into incarceration and its architectures. One portion of the exhibition highlights work by artists Sandow Birk, Alyse Emdur, and Richard Ross, each of whom explores different aspects of imprisonment. *Geographies of Detention* also includes the traveling exhibit the “Guantánamo Public Memory Project,” an examination of the over 100-year history of the US naval station at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

The main gallery of the museum is devoted to the contemporary context and landscape of California's own "golden gulag." Prison populations in California have grown 500% in the last decades even as crime rates subside, and prison spending continues to outweigh state funding for public education. A selection of hauntingly evocative paintings by Sandow Birk from his series "Prisonation" (2001) reflects on the growth of California's prison industrial complex by engaging its geographic context. Taking inspiration from pictorial genres of landscape painting, including those popularized by the Hudson River School in the 19th century, each of Birk's paintings depicts one of California's state prisons, from Pelican Bay in Northern California to Centinela State Prison at the US–Mexico border.

While Birk's work shows the prisons from afar, Richard Ross and Alyse Emdur take the viewer inside these structures. In his series of photographs "Architecture of Authority" (2007), Ross explores the built environment of prisons, revealing the spatial logic used to exert power over the bodies incarcerated within. Emdur's large-scale photographs of prison visiting rooms and collected letters and snapshots (some of which appear in her 2013 book, *Prison Landscapes*) offer a more intimate vision of inmates posing with their visitors against murals in fantasy landscapes of freedom. Presented together, the works of Birk, Ross, and Emdur meditate on the "carceral state" of California.

The "Guantánamo Public Memory Project" combines historical and contemporary photography, film, and first-person audio interviews to examine how the naval base has been "closed" and reopened for more than a century leading up to the attacks on September 11, 2001. These new perspectives on Guantánamo's history as a "legal black hole" provoke discussions about the limits of democracy and the meaning of mass incarceration in a global present and future.

Collaboratively curated by eleven universities (including UCR), the "Guantánamo Public Memory Project" is comprised of a deeply researched traveling exhibit, as well as a website (www.gitmomemory.org), blog, and ongoing public conversation. The panel produced by graduate students in UCR's Public History Program examines Guantánamo as an international symbol of America's War on Terror and a lightning rod for debates about torture, detention, national security, and human rights.

Visit artsblock.ucr.edu for the schedule of related programs.

*The "Guantánamo Public Memory Project" will be on view as part of *Geographies of Detention* through August 10, 2013.

ABOUT THE GUANTÁNAMO PUBLIC MEMORY PROJECT

The Guantánamo Public Memory Project seeks to build public awareness of the century-long history of the US naval station at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and foster dialogue on the future of this place and the policies it shapes. Coordinated by Columbia University's Institute for the Study of Human Rights, the Project has developed a traveling exhibit, online story collection, curricula, public dialogues, and more through collaboration and debates with diverse stakeholders. First launched in 2009 by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, the Project is now developed by a growing number of universities, organizations, and individuals according to common principles while engaged in ongoing debate on the possibilities and pitfalls of "remembering" Guantánamo. The project was supported by the participating universities, Arizona State University, Tempe, Brown University, Indiana University-Purdue University, New York University, Rutgers University, University of California, Riverside, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, University of Minnesota, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, and University of West Florida. Additional support provided by the Open Society Foundations, Libra Foundation, and the New York Council on the Humanities.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Geographies of Detention: From Guantánamo to the Golden Gulag is organized by California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock, and is guest curated by Catherine Gudis, UCR Associate Professor of History and Director of the Public History Program, and Molly McGarry, UCR Associate Professor of History.

This exhibition was made possible in part by the generous support of Dean Stephen Cullenberg, UCR College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, and the UCR History Department's Friends of Public History.

CONCURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Monuments of Void: Wolf von dem Bussche's Photographs of the Twin Towers

March 23–July 6, 2013

California Museum of Photography, Lower Level Gallery

Monuments of Void: Wolf von dem Bussche's Photographs of the Twin Towers examines the re-contextualization of the World Trade Center towers since the attacks of September 11. A selection of von dem Bussche's photographs from the CMP permanent collection evokes issues of memorialization and the meanings imbued in sites and images. Partially abstracted, these powerful photographs made in 1976 today conjure memorialization and loss.

Monuments of Void is curated by UCR student Pejman Shojaei (BA, History, 2013, and BA, Art History, 2013) for the Lower Level Gallery.

Around the World in Forty Pictures

May 4–July 27, 2013

California Museum of Photography

Celebrating the CMP's fortieth anniversary, *Around the World in Forty Pictures* takes as inspiration the classic novel *Around the World in 80 Days* by Jules Verne, first published in 1873. This tale of adventure chronicles the fictitious travels of a British gentleman Phileas Fogg and his French valet Jean Passepartout. The exhibition *Around the World in Forty Pictures*, as the title implies, culls forty pictures from the Keystone-Mast Collection (part of the CMP permanent collection) to retrace the steps of Verne's colorful characters as they circumnavigate the globe.

Around the World in Forty Pictures is curated by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions. It is the first exhibition she is organizing for the CMP.

VISITOR INFORMATION AND PRESS INQUIRIES

UCR ARTSblock is located at 3824 & 3834 Main Steet, Riverside, CA 92501, and includes three venues: California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery, which are open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 pm, plus 6–9pm for First Thursday ArtWalks, which take place on the first Thursday of every month. Admission is \$3, which includes entry to all three venues, and is free during First Thursday ArtWalks (6–9pm). The Culver Center opens 30 minutes prior to film screenings.

Press contact: Joanna Szupinska-Myers, joanna.szupinska@ucr.edu

Public contact: artsblock.ucr.edu

Image, page 1:

Sadow Birk, *Pleasant Valley State Prison (PVSP) – Coalinga, CA, 2000* (Courtesy of the artist and Koplín Del Río Gallery)

###