Hirshhorn Presents Special Screening for “Damage Control: Art and Destruction Since 1950”

*Compelling Moving-Image Works by International Artists Grappling with Destruction Will Screen March 16*

Artists grappling with the pervasiveness of destruction in society have often turned to film and video as a potent means of exploring the subject. While some key works in this genre have been included in the galleries of the exhibition “Damage Control: Art and Destruction Since 1950” at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden through May 26, a special two-part screening, considered an integral part of the exhibition, will present some of the most groundbreaking and thought-provoking moving-image works made between the 1970s and today.

From the medium-defining experimentation of Bruce Conner’s “CROSSROADS” (1976) to the poignantly personal invocation of demolition in Doug Aitken’s “House” (2010), this wide-ranging roster of films reveals the multiplicity of meanings and diversity of approaches that a host of international artists have employed to address the importance of destruction both to people as individuals and in a broader cultural sense. Seven moving-image works will be shown in two different programs in the museum’s Ring Auditorium Sunday, March 16, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

**Program I**
**Sunday, March 16; 11 a.m.**
Bruce Conner, “CROSSROADS,” 1976, 36 minutes

**Program II**
**Sunday, March 16; 2 p.m.**
Cyprien Gaillard, “Pruitt-Igoe Falls,” 2009, 7 minutes
Ant Farm, “Media Burn,” 1975, 23 minutes
SUPERFLEX, “Burning Car,” 2008, 11 minutes
Christian Jankowski, “16mm Mystery,” 2004, 5 minutes
Doug Aitken, “House,” 2010, 9 minutes
About the Artworks

Conner’s “CROSSROADS,” 1976, consists entirely of footage of the 1945 Operation Crossroads Baker atomic test on Bikini Atoll, shot from different angles and at different speeds. The score is by minimalist composer Terry Riley and electronic-music pioneer Patrick Gleeson. The film will be screened as a restored 35mm print, courtesy of the UCLA Film & Television Archive.

Grimonprez’s “Dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y,” 1997, mixes documentary and television footage with fiction—both narrative cinema and excerpts from novels by Don DeLillo—to address the rhetoric of terrorism.

Gaillard’s “Pruitt-Igoe Falls,” 2009, conflates the demolition of a housing project in Glasgow, Scotland (not the St. Louis structures of the work’s title) with the drama of Niagara Falls at night.

Ant Farm’s “Media Burn,” 1975, concocts a satirical “media event” in which a heavily modified Cadillac crashes through a flaming wall of television sets at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. The artists frame the event by examining the way the performance was covered by newscasters.

SUPERFLEX’s “Burning Car,” 2008, presents the total destruction by fire of a Mercedes-Benz.

Jankowski’s “16mm Mystery,” 2004, employs digital effects to convey the destructive power of an experimental film. This film within a film, projected so that viewers cannot see it, alters the skyline of downtown Los Angeles.

Aitken’s “House,” 2010, depicts the artist’s home being demolished as his parents sit staring at one another amid the worsening wreckage.

About the Hirshhorn

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Smithsonian’s museum of international modern and contemporary art, has nearly 12,000 paintings, sculptures, photographs, mixed-media installations, works on paper and new media works in its collection. The Hirshhorn presents diverse exhibitions and offers an array of public programs that explore modern and contemporary art. Located at Independence Avenue and Seventh Street S.W., the museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (closed Dec. 25). Admission to the galleries and special programs is free. For more information about exhibitions and events, visit hirshhorn.si.edu. Follow the Hirshhorn on Facebook at facebook.com/hirshhorn, on Twitter at twitter.com/hirshhorn or sign up for the museum’s eBlasts at hirshhorn.si.edu/collection/social-media. To request accessibility services, contact Kristy Maruca at marucak@si.edu or (202) 633-2796, preferably two weeks in advance.

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