

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

media@cincyart.org

953 Eden Park Drive | Cincinnati, Ohio | 45202

www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org

***Images Available Upon Request**

Explore the natural world in Cincinnati Art Museum's newest commissioned exhibition



CINCINNATI— The Cincinnati Art Museum presents *Natural World*, a photography-based exhibition and artist-designed book that explores and expands existing ideas of the natural order. The special exhibition is on view September 30, 2022–January 15, 2023.

Natural World premieres newly commissioned bodies of work by artists John Edmonds (American, b. 1989) and David Hartt (Canadian, lives/works in the United States, b. 1967), together with new writings by poet and scholar Dr. Jason Allen-Paisant (Jamaican, lives/work in England, b. 1980), and Cincinnati Art Museum Curator of Photography Dr. Nathaniel M. Stein (American, b. 1976).

Featuring over thirty works of art—including photographs, tapestries, and sculptures—*Natural World* explores an intersection of perspectives on the world informed by nationality, race, queer identity, and institutional practice. The artists and writers involved share an interest in the ways the natural and social worlds are intertwined, and together, they bring new points of view to questions such as: What is natural about the world as we know it?

How might we expand our understandings of that world?

“Culturally dominant understandings of naturalness are foundations of knowledge and limitations on our ability to see,” says Stein. “Ultimately, the *Natural World* project is about justice—about what voices and ways of knowing are admitted into human representation of what is valid, obvious, and good. Museums play a role in building and teaching human stories about what we know, and how. They’re also places where stories can evolve in meaningful and influential ways. I’ve been incredibly lucky and honored to explore this territory at CAM, with the support of our funders, and most of all, in partnership with John, David, and Jason.”

Edmonds’s body of work, *Father’s Jewels*, is a profound meditation on family, reflecting on themes of identity, community, and belonging. Conceived in dialogue with sculptures from the museum’s collection of African art and with the European artistic tradition, Edmonds’s photographs explore wounding, conflict, reverence, and love within and between generations of Black men.

Hartt’s project, *The Garden*, examines ways of seeing and picturing the world rooted in European artistic, political, and intellectual traditions. Synthesizing interests he has explored throughout his career, Hartt focuses on plants as they grow outside the physical parameters and social meanings human beings have assigned to them. Both artists offer pivotal statements about what it might look like to include marginalized positions in a shared conversation about the nature of the world.

The exhibition, combining Hartt’s and Edmonds’s commissioned artwork with objects selected from the museum’s permanent collection, occupies two dedicated galleries. In addition, five installations by Edmonds and Hartt appear elsewhere in the museum, inviting audiences to reflect on the meanings carried by nature and naturalness in art and its institutional frameworks—including pictures, sculptures, and gallery narratives, but also presentation furniture, architecture, and grounds.

cincinnati art museum

The exhibition's companion book, titled *The Natural World*, is designed by Hartt and published by the Cincinnati Art Museum. An extension of the *Natural World* project, the book represents Hartt's and Edmonds's photographs in dialogue with artworks and documents selected from the museum's collections. Stein's essay situates the *Natural World* collaboration within a consideration of his professional practice as a trans man. Allen-Paisant writes of his own body as a medium through which to understand his relationship to nature, place, and history, as a Black Jamaican living and working in England.

Natural World will be on view to the public for free in the Sara M. and Michelle Vance Waddell Gallery and the Manuel and Rhoda Mayerson Gallery (Galleries 124 and 125) across from the Terrace Café. No tickets are required. General admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is also free. Photography is encouraged, but no flash. On social media, use the hashtag #CAMNaturalWorld.

Major support for the exhibition is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Additional generous support is provided by FotoFocus and the Charles Scott Riley III Foundation. *Natural World* participates in the 2022 FotoFocus Biennial.

Along with our cohosts, FotoFocus and The Donald P. Sowell Endowment Committee, the museum welcomes CAM members and FotoFocus Passport Holders to celebrate the opening of *Natural World* on Thursday, September 29 from 5–7 p.m. Complimentary shuttle service will make continuous trips between the receptions at CAM and the Taft Museum of Art. Service will be available to museum members and FotoFocus Passport holders.

Visitors are invited to participate in a Conversation with the Artists on Thursday, September 29, from 7–8 p.m. in the Alice Bimel Courtyard. Tickets are required and will soon be available via the [exhibition webpage](#).

In addition, Art After Dark will be themed around the exhibition on Friday, October 28 from 5–9 p.m.

Image credit: John Edmonds (American, b. 1989), *What is the way?*, 2022, pigment inkjet print, 60 x 40 in. (152.4 x 101.6 cm) © John Edmonds, courtesy of the artist, commissioned by the Cincinnati Art Museum

About the Cincinnati Art Museum

The Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the generosity of individuals and businesses that give annually to ArtsWave. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as our members.

Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from the Rosenthal Family Foundation. Special exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free.

cincinnatiartmuseum.org

###