



Press Release
Museum of Contemporary
Art Detroit

For Immediate Release:
February 28, 2018

The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD) Presents
Michael Luchs: Fictitious Character
Opening Reception: Friday, May 11, 2018
Member Hour: 6-7PM
Public Opening: 7-10PM



Courtesy of Michael Luchs and Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD)

DETROIT, February 2018 – **The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD)** is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of the work of Michigan-based artist **Michael Luchs**, opening **Friday, May 11, 2018**. This survey constitutes the largest presentation of Luchs's work to date. The exhibition will remain on view through **Sunday, July 29, 2018**.

A selection of the artist's works will fill MOCAD's Central and DEPE Space galleries. Luchs's paintings and sculptures are heavily worked and reworked, sometimes over the course of many years. They feature layers of color and texture, forming collages of unique gestures, which reflect both his iconic style and the aesthetic of Detroit's Cass Corridor movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

Like many of his fellow Cass Corridor artists, Luchs's work embodies a raw and frenetic romanticism, an energy that frames the unique fabric of his art—whether on paper, board, or canvas, often filled with

scrappy renditions of animals or ovoid forms. Some works are backed with duct tape or framed on delicate wire-rolled paper, the found and scavenged materials gesturing at the ongoing collapse of the industrial center that surrounded him in his early years as an artist.

In the mid-1960s, Luchs began working with the image of the rabbit, which became a hallmark of his figurative depictions. Though his archives are filled with additional motifs—such as frogs, snakes, and moths, a sampling of which will be on display at MOCAD—the rabbit has possessed a particular endurance and come to be emblematic of Luchs's work. Rabbits have long been totems of speed, vulnerability, virility, and spontaneity, characteristics which aptly reflect the Cass Corridor movement's embrace of the anarchic. The ubiquity of natural imagery in the work of an artist creating in the context of Detroit points to the tension Luchs felt in the world around him. Conflicts mirrored not only in the political and social environment, but also in mankind's ongoing mechanical, chemical, and technological assault on the natural world.

As we find ourselves in another period of social, environmental, economic, and political uncertainty—one in many ways reminiscent of the 1960s and '70s—the autonomy that energized Detroit's Cass Corridor artists seems particularly trenchant. Emblems that read as hopeful then resonate again today, echoing both the uncertainty of the present moment and the hope for positive change. Luchs's work pushes us to question the world as we see it, and, with all that has happened in the last several decades, to see the potential and the pitfalls along the road ahead.

Together with Copenhagen-based artist **Tal R's : *this is not Detroit***, on view simultaneously at MOCAD, the exhibition both embodies and challenges the Detroit that exists in the global imagination. Be it through their artistry, cultural beliefs, or, more simply, place of residence, each artist engages a narrative of community and outsiders, and the parallax between them.

ABOUT MICHAEL LUCHS

Michael Luchs (b. Portsmouth, Ohio 1938) was among the celebrated Detroit Cass Corridor painters and sculptors in the 1960s and 1970s. Luchs graduated from Olivet College (Olivet, Michigan) in 1961, and attended the University of Michigan in 1964 before moving to Detroit, where he studied at Wayne State University (1966-68).

His work is part of several collections including the Detroit Institute of Arts, Wayne State University James Duffy Collection, University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA), and the Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum, as well as private collections throughout the United States. He was recently part of the 2017 Invitational Exhibition of Visual Arts at the American Academy of Arts and Letters, in New York, where he was the recipient of the Academy's 2017 Art and Purchase Award.

ABOUT MOCAD

The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit (MOCAD) is an innovative addition to Detroit's vibrant Midtown neighborhood, and functions as a hub for the exploration of emerging ideas in the contemporary arts. As a non-collecting institution, MOCAD is responsive to the cultural content of our time, fueling crucial dialogue, collaboration, and public engagement. The Museum is located between the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Detroit Institute of the Arts, Wayne State University, and the College for Creative Studies. The cavernous 22,000 square foot building, a former auto dealership, has been simply renovated to maintain its raw historic character. MOCAD's ambitious series of public programs includes lectures, musical performances, films, literary readings and educational activities for area youth. Mobile Homestead, by late artist Mike Kelley, is a permanent artwork located on the grounds of the museum. It is both a public sculpture and a private, personal construction – based on the artist's childhood home on Palmer Road in Westland. The ground floor serves as a community event space by and for a diverse public, as Kelley intended. MOCAD is generously supported by individual members, private and corporate foundations, and government agencies. More information can be found at mocadetroit.org.

Michael Luchs: *Fictitious Character* curated by Elysia Borowy-Reeder, Executive Director and Acting

Susanne Feld Hilberry Senior Curator and organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit. Curatorial support is provided by Robin K. Wililams, Ford Foundation Curatorial Fellow at MOCAD. Exhibition Management is provided by Zeb Smith, Exhibitions Manager.



Support for exhibitions and public programs is provided by the A. Alfred Taubman Foundation. Generous support for Michael Luchs: *Fictitious Character* is provided by Karen + Ralph Basile in honor of Julie Reyes Taubman, Gayle and Andrew Camden, Suzy and Burton Farbman, and Marsha and Jeffrey Miro.

The Ford Curatorial Fellows at MOCAD are supported by the Ford Foundation.

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MOCAD Support

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MOCAD Operations are supported by Masco Corporation Foundation, Erb Family Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs, Quicken Loans, the J. Christopher and Anne Reyes Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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MOCAD Youth Programs are graciously funded by the the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Neiman Marcus, the Applebaum Family Compass Fund, MGM Resorts Foundation, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, the Michigan Council for Art and Cultural Affairs, and MGM Grand Detroit.

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Levy, Marsha and Jeffrey Miro, Roz and Scott Jacobson, Sonia and Keith Pomeroy, Sandy Seligman and Gil Glassberg, and, Julie Reyes Taubman and Robert Taubman) for making these programs possible: Mike Kelley's *Mobile Homestead*, Lectures, Poetry, Performance Art, Exhibitions, Film, DEPE Space, Music, Family Day, Public Programming, Education, Literature, and Museum Operations.



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