

For Immediate Release:

CONDENSED MATTER COMMUNITY

Public reception: Saturday, December 12th 2015, 5-8pm
By appointment into January 2016

Synchrotron Radiation Center: Home of Aladdin
3731 Schneider Dr.
Stoughton, WI 53589-3097
USA

Rita Ackermann
Cory Arcangel
Tauba Auerbach
Daniel G. Baird
Alisa Baremboym
Jesse Benson
Jeremy Bolen
Sascha Braunig
Alex Chitty
American Fantasy Classics
Katy Cowan
Paul Druecke

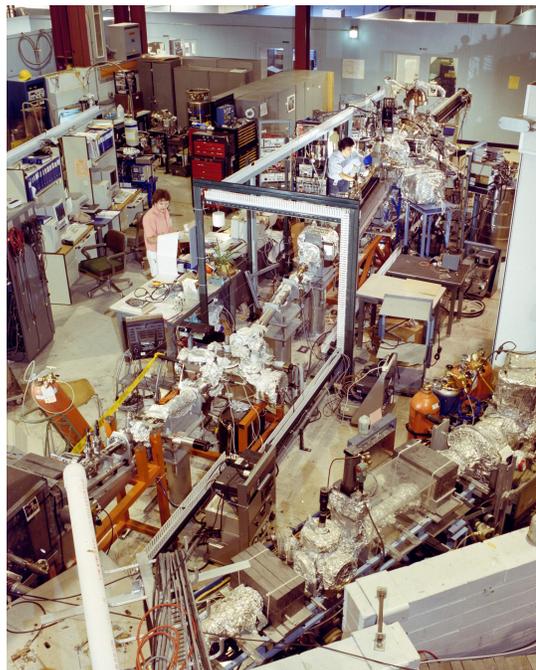
Anna K. E.
Assaf Evron
Richard Galling
Aristotle Georgiades & Gail Simpson
Michelle Grabner
Evan Gruzis
Joel Holmberg
Paul Ramirez Jonas
Miles Huston
José Lerma
Kate Levant & Jason Gomez
Roman Liška

Kylie Lockwood
Tony Matelli
Scott Reeder
John Riepenhoff
David Robbins
Ryan Sawyer
Alina Tenser
Daniel Turner
Philip Vanderhyden
Jacques Louis Vidal
Kristof Wickman

“Dr. Baumann, I learnt a great deal from you at the University about the ultraviolet ray, which you said was the highest color in the spectrum. You were wrong. Here in this machinery, We have gone beyond that.’ (Frankenstein, 1933)”¹

Condensed Matter Community is a site-specific curatorial project designed to generate a dialogue about science, aesthetics, progress and entropy. The project will use the Synchrotron Radiation Center’s (SRC) “vault” as an exhibition space to frame a selection of artworks during a transitional period, prior to forthcoming experiments.

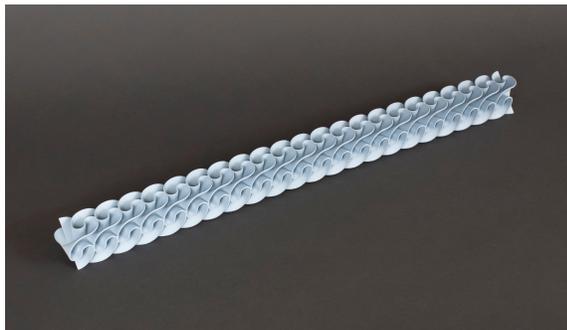
The SRC particle accelerator was part of the University of Wisconsin Madison’s Physical Sciences Laboratories. Situated on limestone bedrock in an below-grade vault, this facility was used for high-energy spectroscopic research for 45 years. Its original electron storage ring, completed



A section of a synchrotron beam line. Photo: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives

in 1968 and dubbed *Tantalus*, was an indirect predecessor to Fermilab in Batavia, IL. A larger storage ring, nicknamed *Aladdin*, was later constructed on the site and reached full power in 1986. It remained a hub of research until it was decommissioned in 2014. In addition to the mythological overtones of its namesakes, the location has a storied history that comments on scientific progress, the collaborative spirit, and the limits of human senses. The multipurpose instruments of the SRC were used in analyzing tree rings, moon rocks, and research into nanotechnology, the biology of cells and DNA, to name just a few examples. Now the center will house DUNE (Deep Underground Neutrino Experiment), heralding a new phase of empirical exploration for the location.

Prompted by this transformation, *Condensed Matter Community* will focus its narrative around the evidence of past experiments and the on-site fabrication of new instruments for future investigations. The SRC's visually-dense, research-oriented venue offers a context rich in complexity. It is embedded with layers of meaning and human traceability, in contrast to the typical commercial contemporary art environment. The liminal space of the laboratory is a setting outside of the art world proper, simultaneously mythic and real. The windowless vault of the SRC, which ran in three shifts 24 hours per day, denotes both a suspension and accumulation of time.



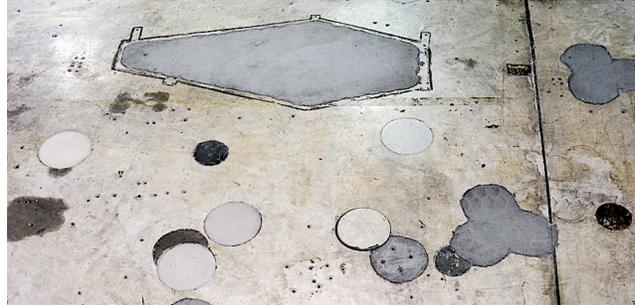
Tauba Auerbach, *Meander Helix (Ribbon)* 2015, 1.625 x 1.625 x 25 inches. 3-D printed resin, paint

The artists involved represent a spectrum of contemporary practices that range from abstract painting to conceptual photography and new media. Through varied curatorial strategies, a curious slippage between art objects, scientific tools, and personal effects will occur. In this way, the artworks' relationship to technological processes come to the fore and alternative readings emerge. The conceptual exchange between the history of the facility, the subjective content of objects viewed in-situ, and the ephemera of future experiments will hopefully uncover new areas of discourse.

Works will include a 3-D printed prototype-sculpture by Tauba Auerbach that is based on the Greek key, or "meander fret" design. With this piece, technology, design and history are brought into concert with one another. Tony Matelli's *Hand 2* (2014) appears to be finger-streaked dusty mirror, but is in fact a permanently fixed composition that engages reflection, entropy, and gesture. David Robbins will appropriate fiction novels into the space, an extension of the work *Endworld (Books By Another David Robbins)*. Playing with authorship, the books become humorous forensics that blur the line between art-objects and casual left-behind belongings. These are just few examples of the strategies that will be alongside the technology at the SRC, which in turn will be reframed by the artwork. The DUNE project's monolithic ice drills take on a sculptural presence next to it's neutrino sensor, whose composition of woven copper filaments over a massive steel frame is akin to some form of abstract hyper-painting.

The SRC vault (read: magic cave) backgrounds all of this with traces of Aladdin’s “lamp”, from the Venn diagram and coffin-shaped cement “footprints” of his experiments in the floor of the facility, to its deconstructed institutional bookshelves, cabinets and “clean rooms”.

Condensed Matter Community will hold an opening event and be available by appointment for a limited period thereafter. However, the project will be documented and continue as a digital platform at www.condensedmattercommunity.org. Here, historical information from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives will be uploaded to allow for an emergent legacy of the space and the project.



The floor of the SRC, 2015

www.condensedmattercommunity.org

About the organizers:

Kristof Wickman (b.1981, Madison, WI) is a sculptor based in Brooklyn, NY. He received his BFA from University of Wisconsin, Madison and his MFA from Hunter College of the City University of New York. Solo exhibitions include *Kristof Wickman* at the Brooklyn Museum and *I'd give anything for another whiff* at Novella Gallery, NYC. Recent curatorial excursions include *Dynasty*, at Hotel Particulier, NYC and *Cisco, Sysco, Sisqo*, Rockaway Beach, Queens. He's currently a visiting lecturer at UW-Madison in the Sculpture Department.

Evan Gruzis (b.1979) is a multidisciplinary artist who received his BFA from the University of Wisconsin Madison and his MFA from Hunter College, NY. He has exhibited widely including solo shows at Deitch Projects, Nicole Klagsbrun, The Hole, The Journal Gallery and The Suburban, and group shows at Museo D'arte Contemporanea Roma and the Weatherspoon Art Museum. His work belongs to numerous collections including those of the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Milwaukee Art Museum, and is represented by DUVE Berlin and The Green Gallery. He has published several monographs and is currently a lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in the Department of Painting and Drawing.

¹SRC User Meeting Guide, 2013. 53. (This quote from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* often found its way into the texts and promotional materials published by the SRC. It echoes not only how the spectroscopic research concerns higher “light” frequencies, but also how the beamline of the SRC was a chimera of various experiments, hosting researchers from many different backgrounds and missions.)