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**The Contemporary Dayton
Presents Three New Exhibitions
to Open the 2024-2025 Season**
Curtis Mann: Precious Blood
Sean Wilkinson: Flora
John Lauer: Demon Heads

DAYTON (Aug 12, 2024) – The Contemporary Dayton (The Co) announces three new exhibitions. ***Curtis Mann: Precious Blood*** and ***Sean Wilkinson: Flora***, September 6-December 21, 2024, are presented in conjunction with the multi-city FotoFocus Biennial. ***John Lauer: Demon Heads*** will be presented October 26- December 21, 2024.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS***Curtis Mann: Precious Blood***

The Dr. Robert L. Brandt, Jr. Gallery & The Ira H. & Susan P. Thomsen Family Gallery

Dayton native, Curtis Mann, returns home to present an experimental new body of work inspired by reflections on his childhood attending Parochial schools, his mother’s Catholic funeral services this past May, and the challenges he faced hiding and then embracing his atheism. Using a mixture of personal family photographs, found, and AI-generated images, Mann has cut and affixed them to shards of glass to create sculptural collages. The work presents us with questions about what a photograph is, about the precarious space between the image and the object, and about the larger ideas of absolute faith, its teachings, and leaders. The work also serves as a love letter to his mother and his own feelings of mortality. Curated by Jeffrey Cortland Jones.

Mann is a graduate of the University of Dayton, where he worked under the mentorship of Sean Wilkinson, whose work is on view in the companion exhibition, *Flora*, also on view. His work has been exhibited widely, most notably at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

Sean Wilkinson: Flora

Wilkinson’s ongoing series of photographs, *Flora* (2020-2024) are the artist’s response to the exuberant vitality of plants, their thrusting and thriving, their boundless energy and raw power, their elegance and grace, their constant changing, and their utter disregard for anything to do with the human world. Photographed over many seasons at Dayton’s Five Rivers MetroParks, Wilkinson brings attention to change, the overlooked, the undisturbed, and how profoundly meditative life can be. Curated by Jeffrey Cortland Jones.

Wilkinson is a Distinguished Service Professor and Professor Emeritus at the University of Dayton, where he served as chair of the Department of Visual Arts and as the Graul Endowed Chair in Arts and Languages. He is the recipient of several Ohio Arts Council and Montgomery County Fellowships among many other awards and prizes. His work has been widely exhibited and housed in over twenty-five significant collections.

John Lauer: Demon Heads

The Jack W. And Sally D. Eichelberger Foundation Video Gallery

Drawing on fantasy, queer culture, and architecture, Lauer creates demon heads out of paper. Combining digital and manual techniques, he first models the heads with architectural software, converts them into patterns which he cuts out of paper with a digital cutter, then meticulously assembles them by hand. Inspired by natural forms—bones, leaves, shells—demons and horned creatures burst forth from more placid human heads merging into structures that are both intertwined and interdependent symbolizing an inner struggle in conflict with the outside world.

John Lauer is an artist and architectural/exhibit designer who lives in a treehouse on the edge of Appalachia. He has a BA in Architecture from Washington University, St. Louis, an MFA in Design from Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, MI, and an M.Arch from Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta.

ABOUT THE FOTOFOCUS BIENNIAL

Curtis Mann: Precious Blood and ***Sean Wilkinson: Flora*** are part of The 2024 FotoFocus Biennial: *backstories*. Now in its seventh iteration, the Biennial activates over 100 projects at museums, galleries, universities, and public spaces throughout Greater Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky, Dayton and Columbus, Ohio in October 2024.

The 2024 FotoFocus Biennial theme, *backstories*, focuses on stories that are not evident at first glance. They offer context for what happened previously or out of view, providing narratives not yet told or presented from a new perspective. Once told, they shed light on current circumstances and events.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS / All programs take place at The Contemporary Dayton and are ALWAYS FREE & OPEN TO ALL

OPENING NIGHT / Friday, September 6

Members Preview with the Artists 5-6 pm / Public Reception 6-8 pm

ARTIST TALK / Friday, November 22 / 6:30 pm

Curtis Mann and Sean Wilkinson with Carmen Winant

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2024-2025 OPERATING SUPPORT DONORS

Culture Works, The Dayton Foundation, The Virginia W. Kettering Foundation, The Montgomery County Arts & Cultural District, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Ohio Arts Council, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and our Members.

GALLERY & CoSHOP HOURS

Wednesday–Saturday 11 a.m.–6 p.m.

Closed Sunday-Tuesday

ALWAYS FREE & OPEN TO ALL

ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY DAYTON

Advancing art for the community and a community for artists since 1991.

The Contemporary Dayton (The Co) is the region's contemporary art center. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, The Co produces and presents ART EXHIBITIONS, ARTIST TALKS, and PUBLIC ART by local, national, and global creatives and makers; and is ALWAYS FREE & OPEN TO ALL. As a non-collecting art center, The Co is one of 45 non-collecting art centers and museums across North America that specialize in presenting modern and contemporary art.

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