



Three Distinct Exhibitions Explore Architecture, Social Engagement, and Japanese “Modern Girls” At Wrightwood 659, May 6 — July 16, 2022

(CHICAGO, IL — March 31, 2022) A trio of exhibitions opens at Wrightwood 659 on May 6, 2022: **AMERICAN FRAMING**, a reinstallation of the U.S. entry in the 17th Venice Architecture Biennale; **Rirkrit Tiravanija: (who’s afraid of red, yellow, and green)**, an exhibition organized by the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC; and **Moga: Modern Women & Daughters in 1930s Japan**, a selection of rarely seen paintings of women and children from 1930s Japan. In addition, **We Shall Defy: Shahidul Alam**, an exhibition of images and texts illuminating the life and work of the renowned Bangladeshi photojournalist and activist, remains on view. These distinct presentations will be installed throughout Wrightwood 659’s unique exhibition space, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando, who transformed a 1920s building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light.

Support for these exhibitions is provided by Alphawood Foundation Chicago.

Alphawood Foundation Executive Director Chirag Badlani said, “Alphawood Foundation is enormously pleased to support this season’s exhibitions at Wrightwood 659. It is the first time we have mounted three exhibitions at once since Wrightwood 659’s inauguration in 2018. Each show speaks to the institution’s founding mission to present exhibitions devoted to architecture and to socially engaged art, including under-recognized artists and works.”

AMERICAN FRAMING (Atrium and Third-Floor Gallery)

AMERICAN FRAMING is a reinstallation of the exhibition presented by the U.S. Pavilion at the 17th International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2021). The exhibition is the first time this project, which explores the architecture of wood framing, will be seen in the U.S. Since the early 19th century, wood framing has been the

most common construction system in the U.S. Currently utilized in more than 90% of new home construction here, it is one of the country's most important contributions to building practice.

AMERICAN FRAMING was made possible by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State and the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC), and is co-curated by architects and professors Paul



Preissner and Paul Andersen. Noted Andersen, “This exhibition comes at a time when national cultural practices are struggling with their histories. How do we come to terms with our past choices? What kinds of futures can we create? *AMERICAN FRAMING* examines the familiar architecture of the country's most common construction system and argues that a profound and powerful future for design can be conceived out of an ordinary past.” Preissner has also noted in dedicating the entire exhibition to wood framing, the U.S. presentation “brings attention to an architectural element mostly overlooked by historical and contemporary discourse.”

The presentation features a monumental installation in Wrightwood 659's three-story atrium—an abstraction of a wood-framed building through which visitors enter the exhibition. The exhibition includes scale models designed by students at the UIC School of Architecture which trace the history of wood framing from its early development through various social and cultural moments in the 20th century. Structures replicated in these models include a round barn in Illinois from the early 20th century, a Levittown home, Spike's doghouse, and one of the earliest examples of framing: St. Mary's Catholic Church, built in 1833 in Chicago. In dialogue with the scale models are two sets of newly commissioned photographs by UIC alumnus Daniel Shea and Chris Strong exploring the culture surrounding wood framing. Interspersed throughout the installation is newly commissioned furniture produced in common lumber, including chairs, rockers, and benches, designed by UIC School of Architecture Clinical Assistant Professor Ania Jaworska, Assistant Professor Thomas Kelley, co-founder of Norman Kelley, and his design partner Carrie Norman.

AMERICAN FRAMING is presented at Wrightwood 659 by Alphawood Exhibitions in cooperation with the University of Illinois Chicago.

Rirkrit Tiravanija: (who's afraid of red, yellow, and green) (Second-Floor Gallery)

In the second-floor gallery, Alphawood Exhibitions presents Thai artist Rirkrit Tiravanija's critically acclaimed artwork (*who's afraid of red, yellow, and green*) (2010), from the collection of the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC. Tiravanija is widely recognized for his practice of manifesting communities through simple acts rather than focusing attention on a single artwork. This installation recasts Wrightwood 659's second-floor gallery as a communal dining space where visitors are periodically offered Thai curries while a large-scale mural—derived from photojournalistic imagery of protests—is drawn on the walls. Through Tiravanija's signature communal food-based work, the artist challenges museumgoers' expectations of performance, and underlines a larger interest in relationships among citizens and notions of government and liberty.

“The Hirshhorn is delighted to share this transformative artwork with Wrightwood 659,” said Hirshhorn Director Melissa Chiu. “Tiravanija's engaging practice offers new perspectives on the ways in which art and creativity are

used to interpret political and social issues of our time. Curated by Betsy Johnson, assistant curator responsible for exhibitions including ‘One with Eternity: Yayoi Kusama in the Hirshhorn Collection,’ this project follows our successful loan of Ai Weiwei’s ‘Trace’ in 2018.”

Tiravanija’s long and varied career defies classification. For nearly 30 years, his artistic production has focused on real-time experience and exchange, breaking down barriers between object and spectator. The title of Tiravanija’s culinary installation, which will be presented in Chicago for the first time, refers to the colors worn by the various factions in recent Thai government protests. It also alludes to the 1982 vandalism of Barnett Newman’s similarly titled painting *Who’s Afraid of Red, Yellow, and Blue III* in Berlin, which was motivated by the attacker’s belief that Newman’s painting was a “perversion” of the German flag. To soften Newman’s provocative title, Tiravanija uses parentheses and lowercase letters, suggesting that viewers answer the question as framed: “Who is afraid of what these colors symbolize?”



Tiravanija’s unorthodox work first came to public view in a 1989 New York group show that included “Untitled Empty Parenthesis,” which consisted of the remains of a green curry meal. He continued to challenge the possibilities of the gallery space, eventually co-opting it as a site for the preparation and consumption of communal meals for gallery-goers, as in “Untitled (Free)” (1992), and even going so far as to invite people to live within the gallery in “Untitled” (1999), which was an exact replica of his East Village apartment. Tiravanija aims to subvert deeply ingrained ways of interacting with art, and, by seeking alternative experiences of time, he opens the door for novel forms of collaboration and exchange, diminishing the preciousness of objects through a reconsideration of their life cycle and function.

Rirkrit Tiravanija: (who’s afraid of red, yellow, and green) is organized by the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

Moga: Modern Women & Daughters in 1930s Japan (Fourth-Floor Gallery)

Wrightwood 659 premieres an intimate selection of Japanese paintings exhibited for the first time in the United States. These works expand on the common depiction of the urbane “modern girl” (*modan gāru* or *moga*). *Moga* captured the public imagination in 1920s Japan—prioritizing an independent lifestyle and challenging the traditional state-sanctioned ideal of the “good wife, wise mother.” Nonetheless, the ideal role of women in Japanese society was not one-dimensional, and continued to diversify during the 1930s. *Moga: Modern Women & Daughters in 1930s Japan* brings paintings of mothers and daughters back into the conversation about the *moga*, exhibiting them beside other, more popular imagery of the “modern girl.”

Minori Egashira, Consulting Curator and PhD candidate at the University of Chicago, states, “We are thrilled the public will have an opportunity to see this presentation of rarely seen works from 1930s Japan. We hope this is just the beginning of a broader and more nuanced conversation about depictions of Japanese women during this period.”

Many of the paintings in the exhibition—all of which are drawn from the private collection of Naomi Pollock and David Sneider—originated in the noted *Meguro Gajoen*, currently Hotel Gajoen Tokyo (ホテル雅叙園東京), a massive entertainment complex first opened in 1931, filled with paintings from the period—primarily of women. The founder of the *Meguro Gajoen*, Hosokawa Rikizō, was a great patron of new Japanese-style paintings (*shin*

nihonga), which blended Western motifs and perspective techniques with traditional Japanese painting materials and methods. He collected many notable artists from the Showa era, as well as works reflective of the period's popular taste.

Both modern in appearance and traditional in values, these works from the walls of the *Meguro Gajoen* featured women and children effortlessly engaged in scenes from everyday life. Such paintings have received less attention than those of the typical, progressive *moga*, which have tended to be the primary focus of past museum exhibitions and academic narratives. *Moga: Modern Women & Daughters in 1930s Japan* is a nuanced exploration of feminine representation during a period of dramatic change.



About Wrightwood 659

Wrightwood 659 is a private, non-collecting institution devoted to socially engaged art and to architecture. Located at 659 W. Wrightwood Avenue, in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, the intimate space was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando, who transformed the interior of a 1920s building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light. Since its inauguration on October 10, 2018, Wrightwood 659 has hosted two exhibitions annually, Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer, including, most recently, *Romanticism to Ruin: Two Lost Works of Sullivan and Wright* and *Yannis Tsarouchis: Dancing in Real Life*.

Hours of Operation

Fridays 12–7pm
Saturdays 10am–5pm

Tickets

Tickets for the exhibition are \$15 and available online only, beginning April 7, at <https://tickets.wrightwood659.org/events>. Please note, admission is by advance ticket only. Walk-ups are not permitted.

COVID-19 Response

Wrightwood 659 requires all staff and guests to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Visitors will be required to show proof of vaccination and booster prior to admission to Wrightwood 659. Proof of vaccine and booster can be an official vaccine card or a photo of the card, along with a matching photo ID. Any individual who does not meet these requirements will not be permitted to enter the building. Children who are ineligible for vaccination (0-4

years old) cannot be admitted to the building. Masks will continue to be required throughout the gallery. Read more about Wrightwood 659's health and safety policy at <https://wrightwood659.org/terms-and-conditions/health-safety/>.

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For additional information: <https://wrightwood659.org>

Image Credits

Wrightwood 659, view of atrium. Photo: © Jeff Goldberg/Esto.

American Framing

Chris Strong, *Untitled*, 2021. Archival Pigment Print, Glass, Wood Frame, 19 x 27 in. Photography by Chris Strong.

Rirkrit Tiravanija: (who's afraid of red, yellow, and green)

Installation view of *Rirkrit Tiravanija: (who's afraid of red, yellow, and green)*, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 2019.

Photo: Shannon Finney. Courtesy Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

Moga: Modern Women & Daughters in 1930s Japan

Ito Shinsui, *Untitled*, Early Showa Period, Four Panel Screen, 108 x 75 in. Private Collection of Naomi Pollock and David Sneider, USA.