

CRISTIN TIERNEY



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**Exhibition website:** <http://willamette.edu/go/mk-guth>

### **“MK Guth: Paying Attention” sparks conversation and an interactive experience of art**

SALEM, Ore.— The Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University is pleased to present “MK Guth: Paying Attention,” featuring the work of nationally recognized Portland, Oregon, artist MK Guth. Organized by Director John Olbrantz, the exhibition opens January 20 and continues through April 1 in the Melvin Henderson-Rubio Gallery.

Over the past fifteen years, Guth has brought people together into cultural conversations with one another, through her photography, video, installations, performances, and mixed-media works. “Paying Attention,” features a range of new and previously created still-life installations, where Guth draws upon the interactive nature of conceptual art to invite her audience to explore how social interaction is shaped through rites and treasured objects.

With the installation “What Needs to Be Said,” visitors can share their thoughts and beliefs about topics such as art, ecology, identity, love, and politics, by writing their answers into five books created by the artist. Guth says these books “act as a container for our collective thoughts and desires for a world beyond what we know, what we have, and what we desire.”

A series of still-life shelf installations inspire visitors to continue their experience at home by providing specific instructions for thought-provoking and interactive themed dinners. For instance, “Dinner to Plan a Revolution” features a shelf with various objects, a suggested menu, and instructions that Guth says are “designed to bring a group of people together in discussion around a table to speak to what they each believe needs changing.”

“Choreography for Reading Aloud” consists of a mixed-media installation of books, manuscripts, letters, and diaries selected by the artist from Willamette University’s Archives and Special Collections, housed at the Mark O. Hatfield Library. The printed materials and objects focus on Oregon art and history and include the diaries of Salem photographer Myra Albert Wiggins; the papers of prominent Oregon politician Norma Paulus; the “zines” of Salem artists nic and sloy; and the AIDS journals of Paul Wynne, among others. Visitors can select

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transcripts from the texts to read aloud individually or as a group, creating a cacophony of sounds where stories collide with facts, theories, opinions, and lists.

Guth will discuss her art and career on January 25 at 7:30 pm in the Paulus Lecture Hall at the Willamette University College of Law. In addition, formal reading performances of "Choreography for Reading Aloud" will take place in the museum's Atrium Gallery at 12:30 p.m. on January 23, February 10 and 20, and March 10 and 20.

Guth's work has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Australia, and Europe, and her artworks are included in important public and private collections in this country as well as abroad. Guth is an Associate Professor at the Pacific Northwest College of Art where she has taught since 2004.

This exhibition has been supported by general operating support grants from the City of Salem's Transient Occupancy Tax funds and the Oregon Arts Commission. The Hallie Ford Museum of Art wishes to thank MK Guth and the many lenders to the exhibition, including the Elizabeth Leach Gallery in Portland and the Cristin Tierney Gallery in New York City.

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## **About the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University**

Oregon's third largest art museum features works by Pacific Northwest and Native American artists, and includes a diverse collection of traditional European, American and Asian art, as well as artifacts that date from antiquity. Frequently changing exhibitions include lectures, special events, tours, artist demonstrations and educational opportunities for children and adults.

The museum is located at [700 State St.](#) in Salem. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. The galleries are closed on Monday. General admission is \$6, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for students 18 and older. Students 17 and under and children are admitted free. Admission is free for everyone on Tuesdays. For more information call 503-370-6855 or [visitwillamette.edu/go/hfma](http://visitwillamette.edu/go/hfma).