

CRISTIN TIERNEY

THE ORACLE

Invisible no more

The Contemporary Art Museum's new exhibit puts a focus on pulling the curtain back on "political invisibility"

By Remy Dirlam, CORRESPONDENT on January 8, 2019



The Contemporary Art Museum (CAM) has not shied away from controversial issues in the past. Having put a spotlight on global issues, human rights and different cultures in recent years, CAM is not deviating from that trend with its new exhibit.

Beginning Jan. 11 at 7 p.m., CAM's latest exhibit, *The Visible Turn*, will be open to students and the public until March. 2.

According to Noel Smith, the deputy director of CAM, *The Visible Turn: Contemporary Artists Confront Political Invisibility* is an exhibit that shows the deprivation of people and ideas that are kept from today's social, political, economic and cultural life.

Karolina Sobecka, Bosco Sodi, Tavares Strachan and Jorge Tacla are the four artists being featured in the exhibit.

CRISTIN TIERNEY

The exhibit includes Tacla's 26-foot "portraits" of the Syrian city of Homs, Sobecka's exploration of climate change through reconstruction of historical clouds, the raising of Sodi's *Muro* — which is a wall that was constructed by Mexican migrants — and Strachan's installation of *130,000 years*.

According to a press release from CAM, Tacla is a New York-based artist who creates blurred photos used to represent the damaged view of the world. In the 1980s and 1990s, Talca devoted his paintings to what is thought of as the world's "worst nightmares." His subjects consist of the bombing of the Alfred Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City and multiple conflicts in the Middle East.

Sobecka is also a New York-based artist and designer who works with the combination of art, science and technology.

In the installation at CAM, three clouds that have been altered are set to be reassembled— the three clouds featured in this installment includes, a supercloud from the explosion of an Indonesian volcano located on Mount Tambora in 1815, a cloud that was formed in a "cold box" at the General Electric Research Laboratory and a cloud that is scheduled for creation this year. Much like Tacla and Sobecka, Sodi also is a New York-based artist. Though, by channeling his Mexican heritage, he is known for his large-scale paintings and sculptures. *Muro* is a wall that is constructed of clay bricks that were made by Mexican migrants.

Strachan is a New York- and Nassau-based conceptual artist who uses multimedia to investigate science, technology, mythology, history and exploration. *130,000 years* highlights the invisibility and fragility of the arctic wilderness.

The exhibitions in CAM are chosen and scheduled based on the museum's mission statement, which is to "bring to the University and the Tampa Bay community vital, investigative and scholarly contemporary exhibitions."

The exhibits are not decided on by happenstance, according to Smith. Instead, she and her team of senior curators work years ahead of time to develop each exhibit.

"We work at least two years ahead," Smith said. "For every exhibition we ask a number of questions, including: 'Is it relevant to our mission? Is the artwork of the highest quality? Does it address contemporary issues that are important to our students? Will it be accessible and offer ample opportunity for curricular engagement?'"

Smith said the four artists in *The Visible Turn* bring different outlooks to social issues such as perspectives on climate, the importance of collective action, destruction due to modern warfare and political "invisibility."

CRISTIN TIERNEY

After the opening-night reception, CAM will host a number of events aligned with the theme of the exhibit.

These events include a public installation and performance of *Muro* on Jan. 24, a curator's tour on Feb. 14 and a concert performed by USF's School of Music inspired by the exhibition on Feb. 22.

Though the exhibits CAM host are ever evolving and changing, according to Smith, each has a commonality.

"We strive to present a textured and varied program that reaches into many areas of our lives," Smith said. "Every exhibition is different in that sense. What never changes is the commitment to scholarship and engagement."