

**McEvoy Foundation for the Arts Presents
*Six Sensational Ocean Views***

*Notes on la mère la mer with Nicole Archer, Torrey
Cummings, Carolyn Finney, Kathleen Graber, Nicole
Hernandez Hammer and Chani Nicholas*

November 18, 2017
1 – 6:30pm



San Francisco, CA. (October 2017) – Experience an afternoon of talks and performance with *Six Sensational Ocean Views*, a set of playful and thought-provoking ruminations on *la mère la mer*, the McEvoy Foundation for the Arts' inaugural exhibition on November 18, 2017. The public event is curated by Frank Smigiel, associate curator, SFMOMA. He is joined by writers and performers Chani Nicholas, Nicole Archer, Nicole Hernandez Hammer, Carolyn Finney, Kathleen Graber, and Torrey Cummings.

The exhibition *la mère la mer*, or *the mother, the sea*, cuts the elemental to human scale. Few of us sail open water or experience the ocean as something immeasurably vast, so the image of the sea-as-mother fits experiences shaped by a land's edge: beach resorts, sand castles, and boardwalk rides.

Meeting *la mère la mer* in this way – on vacation! – we invoke her happy leisure, a suspended if saturated time that almost always ends too soon.

“Recalling the base unit of a system – the family – *la mère la mer* stands too for an infrastructure we may or may not see. Leisure marks an industry as well as a time, and both townies and summer people punch a clock by the sea to make everyone else’s vacation work. Beaches themselves shake out demographically, with impossible wealthy enclaves raising protective hedgerows against the honky-tonk towns pretending to a middle-class splendor. Closer to shore, our watery mother looks a lot like us. We leave her not changed by sublime encounter but refreshed, perhaps, in our own world shored up in her waves,” states Smigiel.

This program considers *la mère la mer* as she exists as a principle, an economy, an ideology, a memory, an ideal, an inspiration, and a goddess. Art historian Nicole Archer highlights the evolution of swim wear in the 1960’s, particularly through the avant-garde designs of Rudi Gernreich and his “monokini.” Sociologist Carolyn Finney considers the racial imagination of the “great outdoors,” and who can occupy places like the beach. Poet Kathleen Graber invokes the rhythms of resort towns through her hometown of Wildwood, New Jersey. Climate scientist Nicole Hernandez Hammer looks at the future of Miami’s neighborhoods and so to that of coastal cities around the globe. Astrologer & activist Chani Nicholas weighs the metaphors and inspirations of water signs. And Torrey Cummings concludes the evening with her performance *Sailors Signaling Other Sailors*, a meditation on human contact and crossing distance.

Admission free

For more information contact: www.mcevoyarts.org

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About McEvoy Foundation for the Arts

The newly established McEvoy Foundation for the Arts (MFA) is organized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit intended to deepen public appreciation of modern and contemporary art. (MFA is not a grant making entity.) Founded by Nion McEvoy, CEO of Chronicle Books, MFA will display selections from the McEvoy Family Collection together with new works in visual, literary, and film and media arts. MFA will also offer unique opportunities for national and international collaborations with artists, institutions, galleries, and private collections.

Highlighting the breadth of the McEvoy Family Collection, *la mère la mer* [the mother the sea] features works from the collection of Nion McEvoy and the collection of his mother, Nan Tucker McEvoy (1919–2015). The exhibition, on view until January 13, 2018, pays tribute to Nan McEvoy’s devoted, life-long

interest in and support of California artists including Wayne Thiebaud, Richard Diebenkorn, Ed Ruscha, and David Hockney, while showcasing Nion McEvoy’s interest in works by artists such as Anne Collier, Carsten Höller, Roe Ethridge, and Ragnar Kjartansson.

The exhibition is organized around a principle of poetic assonance: Works from the collection of the mother (*la mère*) resonate with works from the collection of the son and many depict the sea (*la mer*). The combination is more playful digression than controlled planning, and it reveals both commonalities and divergences across two related but singular creative minds.

la mère la mer will be on view October 28, 2017 – January 13, 2018.

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Photo Credit: John Wesley, *Untitled (Ocean)*, 1979 Acrylic on paper, 15 x 21 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Fredericks & Freiser, NY.

McEvoy Foundation for the Arts

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Gallery admission free.