



# THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, July 30, 2018

**THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, LOS ANGELES (MOCA), PRESENTS  
*ONE DAY AT A TIME: MANNY FARBER AND TERMITE ART***

**October 14, 2018–March 11, 2019  
MOCA Grand Avenue**



**LOS ANGELES**—The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), presents *One Day at a Time: Manny Farber and Termite Art*, an ambitious exhibition inspired by American painter and film critic Manny Farber and his legendary underground essay “White Elephant Art vs. Termite Art” (1962). The exhibition is organized by Helen Molesworth and features approximately thirty artists and more than one hundred carefully selected works of painting, sculpture, photography, film, video, and sound dating from the 1950s to the present. *One Day at a Time* is conceived as a cross between a monographic exhibition and a group show—an experiment in exhibition-making in the spirit of Farber’s call for “termite art.”

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MOCA PRESENTS *ONE DAY AT A TIME: MANNY FARBER AND TERMITE ART*

Page 2 of 4

Originally appearing in *Film Culture* magazine, “White Elephant Art vs. Termite Art” was written as a screed against the idea of the masterpiece and works of art produced by “overripe technique shrieking with preciousness, fame, ambition.” Farber championed art that was committed to observation, deep attention, and the unique temporalities of the quotidian. In his words, termite art was produced through the act of “both observing and being in the world, a journeying in which the artist seems to be ingesting both the material of his art and the outside world through horizontal coverage.”

*One Day at a Time* uses Farber’s idea of termite art as a methodology for assembling the contemporary works of disparate artists as a means to think about time in its many dimensions, from the daily to the cosmological. The genre of still life plays an important role in this endeavor. Long the area of Western painting in which the passage of time—and the implications of that passing in both ethical and natural terms—has been explored, still life remains a form that exemplifies Farber’s commitment, both as a writer and a painter, to the daily, the modest, and the space in between things.

Farber’s eye-level perspective on the subtle connections that undergird the stuff of daily life provides *One Day at a Time* with its structure: the hybrid approach of the exhibition is itself an outgrowth of Farber’s horizontal viewpoint. It begins with a group of Farber’s idiosyncratic still-life paintings and works on paper from the late 1970s and 1980s, then fans out from this monographic presentation to explore the ways other artists have dedicated themselves to the pursuit of the everyday. The rooms of the exhibition are envisioned as small galaxies, each orbiting around a work by Farber and bound by the gravitational pull of artists “observing and being in the world.” The manifestations of this simultaneous immersion in and reckoning with the world are both distinct and interrelated. The artists gathered in *One Day at a Time* immerse themselves in the natural world and record the details of daily life. In so doing, they reorder the priorities of our culture away from fame, celebrity, grandiosity, and money and instead present the detailed, the minor, and the overlooked as a way to better connect with the realm of the everyday, offered here as the space of ethics and love.

Artists included:

Dike Blair  
Joan Brown  
Beverly Buchanan  
Jordan Casteel  
Vija Celmins  
Leidy Churchman  
Moyra Davey  
Taylor Davis  
Tacita Dean  
Manny Farber  
Fischli & Weiss  
Jean-Pierre Gorin  
Jennifer Guidi  
Roni Horn  
Kahlil Joseph  
Sylvia Plimack Mangold  
Chris Marker  
Josiah McElheny  
Roy McMakin  
Rodney McMillian  
Aliza Nisenbaum  
Catherine Opie  
Patricia Patterson  
Quintron  
Charles Ray  
Rachel Rose  
Sue Schardt

MOCA PRESENTS *ONE DAY AT A TIME: MANNY FARBER AND TERMITE ART*

Page 3 of 4

Nancy Shaver  
Lorna Simpson  
Becky Suss  
Wolfgang Tillmans  
Jonas Wood

**About the Catalogue:**

A substantial full-color exhibition catalogue published by Prestel will accompany the exhibition. It will include an essay by Helen Molesworth and reprints of some of Farber's most memorable pieces of writing, as well as an interview with filmmaker Jean-Pierre Gorin on the subject of termite art, a reminiscence of Farber as a teacher by artist and filmmaker Jason Simon, and a commissioned project by artists Gregg Bordowitz and Glenn Ligon.

*One Day at a Time: Manny Farber and Termite Art* is organized by Helen Molesworth with Rebecca Lowery, Curatorial Assistant, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Lead support is provided by Annenberg Foundation and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Major support is provided by Maria Seferian.

Generous support is provided by Matthew Marks Gallery.

Exhibitions at MOCA are supported by the MOCA Fund for Exhibitions with lead annual support provided by Sydney Holland, founder of the Sydney D. Holland Foundation. Generous funding is also provided by Dr. Alexander and Judith Angerman, Delta Air Lines, Earl and Shirley Greif Foundation, and Nathalie Marciano and Julie Miyoshi.

Additional support is provided by Holly and Albert Baril, David Kordansky Gallery, and Beth Rudin DeWoody.

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In-kind media support is provided by **KOET**  and KCRW 89.9 FM.

Image credit: Manny Farber, *Domestic Movies*, 1985, oil on board, 96 × 96 in. (243.84 × 243.84 cm), ResMed Collection

**RELATED PROGRAMS**

**MEMBERS' OPENING: *ONE DAY AT A TIME: MANNY FARBER AND TERMITE ART***

Saturday, October 13, 7–9pm

MOCA Grand Avenue

INFO 213/621-1794 or [membership@moca.org](mailto:membership@moca.org)

FREE for MOCA members; no reservations necessary

Please check [moca.org](http://moca.org) for updates on related programs.

**THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, LOS ANGELES (MOCA)**

**About MOCA:** Founded in 1979, MOCA's vision is to be the defining museum of contemporary art. In a relatively short period of time, MOCA has achieved astonishing growth with three Los Angeles locations of architectural renown; a world-class permanent collection of more than 7,000 objects, international in scope and among the finest in the world; hallmark education programs that are widely emulated; award-winning publications that present original scholarship; groundbreaking monographic, touring, and thematic exhibitions of international repute that survey the art of our time; and cutting-edge

MOCA PRESENTS *ONE DAY AT A TIME: MANNY FARBER AND TERMITE ART*

Page 4 of 4

engagement with modes of new media production. MOCA is a not-for-profit institution that relies on a variety of funding sources for its activities.

**Hours:** MOCA Grand Avenue (located at 250 South Grand Avenue in Downtown Los Angeles) is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11am to 6pm; Thursday from 11am to 8pm; Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 5pm; and closed on Tuesday. The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA (located at 152 North Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012) has the same hours as MOCA Grand Avenue during exhibitions. Please call ahead or go to [moca.org](http://moca.org) for the exhibition schedule for The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA. MOCA Pacific Design Center (located at 8687 Melrose Avenue, West Hollywood, CA 90069) is open Tuesday through Friday from 11am to 5pm; Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 6pm; and closed on Monday. The MOCA Store at MOCA Grand Avenue (located at 250 South Grand Avenue) is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 10:30am to 5:30pm; Thursday from 10:30am to 8:30pm; and Saturday and Sunday from 10:30am to 6:30pm.

**Museum Admission:** General admission is free for all MOCA members. General admission is also free for everyone at MOCA Grand Avenue and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA on Thursdays from 5pm to 8pm, courtesy of Wells Fargo. General admission is always free at MOCA Pacific Design Center. General admission at MOCA Grand Avenue and The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA is \$15 for adults; \$8 for students with I.D.; \$10 for seniors (65+); and free for children under 12 and jurors with I.D.

**More Information:** For 24-hour information on current exhibitions, education programs, and special events, call 213/626-6222 or access MOCA online at [moca.org](http://moca.org).

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