

## **Marissa Lee Benedict**

Two small copper pipes hammered into the center of Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty: one positively charged, the other negatively charged. A low-voltage current runs between the two, freeing copper ions and collecting sodium and chlorine, creating a crusty blue-green patina on one pipe as the other slowly blackens and weakens. Snow has accumulated on the basalt rocks of Spiral Jetty, and the air is so still you can hear the faint hiss and crackle of bubbles bursting as electricity reacts with salt and copper and water.

From the distillation of algal biodiesel, to the extraction of a geologic core sample with a set of gardening tools, to the imagined fabrication of fiber optic infrastructures, I am an artist who explores connection as material, and energy as form. I research and recreate industrial systems and scientific processes to become intimately familiar with the plant and mineral elements that we extract, concentrate and metabolize to fuel our highly synthesized and ever-accelerating world. Water, algae, oil, petroleum, bitumen, carbon, silicon, salt, wood, clay, fat, switchgrass, fiberglass, copper, steel, honey, plastic.

Branching out of American land art and systems aesthetics of the 1960s and 70s, I seek to produce video installations and sculptural works that picks apart contemporary forms of power: science, technology and global infrastructure. I want to find the spaces where the virtual becomes fragile and physical: the places where the sun's UV rays agitate and embrittle polyethylene bonds; the chambers where atmospheric gases are collected and recorded; the sites where the digital world's dependence on natural resources and human labor is revealed. I want to sniff out the moments where the pre-baked system falls apart. I want to feel where the infrastructural joinery is weak, searching for the cracks in the mortar and the gaps in the cables that allow for the insertion of new conduits and strange loops. There is risk involved in exposing vulnerabilities, and in being vulnerable: to encounter, to exchange and to unexpected reactions.

## **Marissa Lee Benedict Biography**

Marissa Lee Benedict (b. 1985, Palm Springs, USA) is a sculptor, writer, lecturer and avid amateur of many fields and disciplines. Motivated by a deep curiosity about the function and dysfunction of social, ecologic and industrial systems, her practice is one of active observation; of engagement; of instigation; of experimentation. She has exhibited nationally and internationally, most recently at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, EXPO Chicago, the DePaul Art Museum, threewalls and the Hyde Park Art Center in Chicago, IL; at Hauser & Wirth (Somerset) in the U.K.; and at Contemporary Art Brussels in Belgium. For two year, Benedict has produced a series of video installation works in collaboration with partner David Rueter. The artist team continues to work on the subjects of technology, the environment, and social and infrastructural responses to shifts in these arenas, most recently receiving a National Endowment for the Arts "Art Works" grant through the Legacy Foundation for their project Gary Streetlights (part of the Heat Light Water Cultural Project lead by artist Jan Tichy and administrator Jeffreen Hayes).

Benedict received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) and an MFA in Sculpture from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). She currently lectures at the University of Oregon in Sculpture and Fiber; previously holding positions as a lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and as Program Coordinator for the Arts, Science & Culture Initiative at the University of Chicago.

# Marissa Lee Benedict

## Resume

### Education

2009 –11

School Of The Art Institute Of Chicago (Saic) · Chicago, IL  
Master of Fine Arts, Sculpture

2003 –07

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) · Providence, RI  
Bachelor of Fine Arts, Illustration, Art History

### Solo and 2 Person Exhibitions

2018

Unthought Environments The Renaissance Society, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL (curated by Karsten Lund)

2017

I Come Apart, Bert Green Fine Art, Chicago, IL

Ditch Projects @ Soil Gallery, Seattle, WA

Tone Circle, Ditch Projects @ Private Places, Portland, OR

The Dangerous Professors, Triumph, Chicago, IL (curated by Ruslana Lichtizer)

2016

Arid Systems, The Ski Club, Milwaukee, WI

Placelessness, University Galleries, Normal, IL (in collaboration with David Rueter; curated by Jason Judd, University Galleries, ISU)

Petcoke: Tracing Dirty Energy, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago, IL (in collaboration with David Rueter; commissioned by Karen Irvine and Natasha Egan, MoCP)

2015

The Works: Artists In and From Chicago, Contemporary Art Brussels, Brussels, Belgium (in collaboration with David Rueter; curated by Dieter Roelstrate and Abigail Winograd)

Soil Culture: Young Shoots, Center for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (CCANW), U.K. (traveling exhibition to Hauser & Wirth (Somerset), curated by Clive Adams, Director, CCANW)

Dark Fiber, EXPO Chicago, Chicago Artists' Coalition Booth 121 (CAC), Chicago, IL (in collaboration with David Rueter; curated by Jacob Proctor)

Dark Fiber, Chicago Artists Coalition (CAC), Chicago, IL (in collaboration with David Rueter)

A House of Dust (Marissa Lee Benedict & Phil Peters), Heaven Gallery, Chicago, IL

Making Do, Antenna Gallery, New Orleans, LA

2014

The Chicago Effect: Redefining the Middle, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL (curated by Christopher K. Ho, Allison Peters Quinn and Megha Ralapati)

dig.core.mine.erase, Harold Washington College, Chicago, IL

Augur, Chicago Artists' Coalition (CAC), Chicago, IL

2013

\*MULTIPLICES, Threewalls SOLO, Chicago, IL

Climate of Uncertainty, DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL (curated by Laura Fatemi, former Chief Curator, DePaul Art Museum)

The Dig: Marissa Lee Benedict, Allison Rowe and Nina Barnett, Heaven Gallery, Chicago, IL (curated by Pat Elifritz, Independent curator)

2012

Joan Mitchell Foundation 2011 MFA grant recipients, CUE Art Foundation, NYC

Life, in some form (Marissa Lee Benedict & Brittany Ransom), Chicago Artist's Coalition, Chicago, IL

Plural Zone, Leroy Neiman Center (SAIC), Chicago IL (curated by Torkwase Dyson)

21st Evanston and Vicinity Biennial, Evanston Art Center, Evanston, IL (juried by Shannon Stratton, previous Executive Director of Threewalls)

Drawing for Sculpture, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago IL

2011

post-human // future tense, Columbia College, Arcade Gallery, Chicago, IL (in collaboration with Luis Palacios as GRAFT)

Tropical Labs 4, ICA Gallery, LaSalle College of Art, Singapore

Public Light & Space: Public Art Projects for the 21st Century, John Hancock Center, Chicago, IL

### **Awards and Residencies**

2017

Artport, Tel Aviv, Israel (supported by the Hyde Park Art Center Jackman Goldwasser Residency's national and international exchange program)

2016-17

NEA "Art Works" Grant for Gary Lights Open Works, awarded through the Legacy Foundation, Gary, IN (in collaboration with David Rueter; supported by Jeffreen Hayes, Jan Tichy and the Heat Light Water project)

2014/15/16/17

Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI) Desert Research Station, Hinkley, CA 2016

Banff Research in Culture Residency: On Energy, The Banff Centre, Alberta, CN

Artist in Residence, Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Artist-in-Residence, Jackman Goldwasser Residency, Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, IL (co-residency with artists Meghan Moe Beitiks, Liz Ensz and Lindsey French)

2014 -15

BOLT Residency (Mentor), Chicago Artists Coalition, Chicago, IL

2014

Soil Culture Residency, Center for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (CCANW), University of Exeter, Environment and Sustainability Institute, Cornwall campus, U.K.

2013/14/15 8550 (Harold Arts), Chesterhill, Ohio

2013 -14

BOLT Residency, Chicago Artists Coalition, Chicago, IL

2013

Ox-Bow Fall Residency, Ox-Bow Scholarship (Joan Mitchell Foundation), Saugatuck, MI 2012

ACRE Residency, Simone's Scholarship, Steuben, WI

2011

Vermont Studio Center, Full Fellowship, Johnson, VT Joan Mitchell Foundation, MFA Grant Recipient

### **Select Events, Lectures, Workshops & Panels**

2017

Artist Lecture, Artport, Tel Aviv, Israel

Visiting Critic, Video Installation course, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

2016

Aper\_ture: Admitting the light, MCA Live, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL Seeing Dust: DIY Particle Sensor

Workshop, SkyARTS, hosted by the MoCP, Chicago, IL Panelist, "Big Data and the Public Good," Illinois Humanities

Council, Chicago, IL Panelist, Petcoke: Tracing Dirty Energy Symposium, Columbia College, Chicago, IL

Paper presentation, Human-Non-Human-Networks Symposium, School of the Art Institute of Chicago Visiting Artist

Lecture, University Galleries, Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Visiting Artist & Artist Lecture (Form Fit Series, Gallery 400), University of Illinois at Chicago

2015

Re: Active Listening, Art and Environmental Activism, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD (at the invitation of

Professor Jane Bennett, author of Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things)

Visiting Artist, Department of Art, Graduate Studies, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

Roundtable participant, Excavating the Universe: Physics Interacts with the Arts, The Commons, Spencer Museum of Art, Lawrence, KS

2013

Artist Lecture, DePaul Art Museum, Chicago, IL

### **Organized & Curated Screenings, Exhibitions & Events**

2018

the world, interior, Sector 2337, Chicago, IL

2015

INTERLOCKING SINGLE-MODE 21-STRAND FIBER OPTIC CABLE, EXPO Chicago, Chicago Artists

Coalition (CAC), Booth 121, Chicago, IL

A curated screening of 21 short videos from 24 artists whom have participated in CAC programs over the past 5 years. Choreographed as a series of well-timed interjections, interludes, and interlocutions, the 21 videos being screened interrupt Dark Fiber (a video installation by Marissa Lee Benedict & David Rueter) on the hour, every hour, over the course of the 3-day art fair.

Line of Sight, Chicago Artists Coalition (CAC), Chicago, IL

An evening screening of short films and videos solicited via an open call to artists and filmmakers in the Chicago region and beyond. Although open in its curatorial premise, the videos selected for the Line of Sight screening critically address (1) the method of the video or film's transmission from author to gallery and (2) the media format and/or playback device by which the video is projected in the gallery.

### **Select Publications (As Author/Editor)**

2018-19

the world, interior (co-editor / author), Green Lantern Press, Chicago, IL 2017

Co-authored essay for Energy Cultures, West Virginia University Press

2016

"Arid Systems: Observations on extremophiles in an age of extra-, hyper-, super- objects," Antennae Magazine (<http://www.antennae.org.uk/>)

"A Particulate Atmosphere: Dust, Data and States of Suspension," Data, Democracy and the Human Story: A Companion Reader, Vol. 2, Illinois Humanities Council

2015

(editor) Dark Fiber: A Companion Guide to Interpreting Internet Infrastructure, self-published 2013

Newcity, "Visiting Artist: Marissa Lee Benedict" (May 7 2013)

### **Select Media & Press**

2017

Canadian Art, "Canadian Oil Sands Waste Targeted in American Exhibition," Leah Sandals 2016

Chicago Reader, "The petcoke problems of the southeast side hit the MoCP," Ionit Behar

Chicago Post-Tribune, "Art project to put lights in Gary Parks," Nancy Coltun Webster 2015

Chicago Reader, "Can Chicago artists salvage Gary, Indiana?," Ruth Lopez

Artforum, "Golden Gate," Zeenat Nagree

Visual Art Source, "Marissa Lee Benedict & David Rueter," Robin Dluzen Agenda Magazine (Belgium), "The Sweat of the Brow," Sam Steverlynck Water After Borders, "Water in Art," Curated by Doug Fogelson

2013

Newcity, "Breakout Artists 2013: Chicago's Next Generation of Image Makers," Jason Foumberg Fnewsmagazine,

"Ecopunk", Kris Lenz, Chicago, IL

2012

Chicago Magazine, 'Gallerybrewing' Is Now a Thing in the Chicago Art Scene," Jason Foumberg 2011

Hyperallergic, "Three Summer MFA Shows Tackle Painting and Its Discontents," Alison Meier 2011

Make Space, "Marissa Lee Benedict," Etta Sandry

Huffington Post, "School Of The Art Institute Of Chicago 2011 MFA Sculpture Grads," Kimberly Brooks, 6/17/11  
(Feature)

Artlog, "Meet the Class of 2011," Pauline Eiferman  
2010

Post Human// Future Tense, Catalogue/ Essays, Columbia College Press (GRAFT) ArtSlant Chicago, "Welcome Back,"  
Abraham Ritchie