

**Mohamud Mumin**

*Fwd: The “window” into Jay’s office, 2016*

Site-specific installation

Hi Mohamud,

I would like to feature an exhibition of four photographers in MCAD’s Concourse Gallery this fall — different approaches to the notion of presenting/representing an immigrant experience. I was hoping you, Pao, Selma Fernandez Richter, and Steve Ozone would be willing to participate. The show would open at the same time as the Jerome show, on Oct. 7, and be on view through Nov. 13.

Let me know if you are interested and we can talk more specifics.

Thanks,

Kerry

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KERRY MORGAN

Director, Gallery and Exhibition Programs

MCAD X MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

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Hi Kerry,

Thank you for thinking of me for this exhibition. Sounds wonderful, and in good company. I have a few things going on this year, but I would not want to miss out on any initiative that’s coming from you.

As you know, my work directly addresses issues within my community — and, on a more philosophical level the work addresses/redresses the pitfalls many “outsiders” unwittingly recapitulate in their work when photographing others. Ultimately, nuanced negotiations throughout photo projects are inherently about power — who controls what and where — and about image, self-representation as well as self-termination. I would like to hear more about the photographers and about the exhibition.

I’m excited and looking forward to hearing more from you soon.

Thanks,  
Mohamud.

—  
MOHAMUD MUMIN  
Visual Storyteller  
HUNDRED MILES PICTURES

Hi Mohamud,

I am pleased that you are interested in participating. The issues you cited are really the ones I am interested in exploring. . . . I think there is reason to look closely and deeply at the politics of representation and hopefully this show will do that. . . .

I know so much has been written and presented in terms of the documentary photograph and the topic of immigration, but hopefully there is room and a need to keep talking about both the methods and the subject/object positions that are still in play every time we see/take/make an image.

I would like to talk with each one of you individually and then meet as a group together to select the work. I see this as a process as much as a product and will definitely provide everyone with an honorarium for their time.

Thank you!  
Kerry

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Hi Kerry,

Thank you and I appreciate where you are coming from with this exhibition — it is timely and important conversation that is often missing from contemporary photography discourse.

. . . .

Thank you and I look forward to talking with you more.

Mohamud.

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Kerry Morgan <> wrote:

Hi Jay,

In the Concourse Gallery this fall (October 7-November 8) I have invited four local artists who are known primarily as photographers to be in a show titled The New Americans. Pao Houa Her, Mohamud Mumin, Selma Fernandez Richter, and Steve Ozone all create bodies of work about recent immigrants or refugees to the United States. They themselves come from different backgrounds and approach their picture making, which includes their own relationship to the people they photograph, in significantly divergent ways.

Mohamud Mumin is very invested in making his work with his own Somali community in mind. For example, when his Somali youth portrait project has been presented publicly it has had a public component — a community broadside and community reception. For a show at MCAD he would rather present the philosophy of his art making than present specific photographs and create a Somali-community focused event that makes less sense in a group show context. Mohamud can only make a photograph of what he knows intimately. He photographs the people and spaces he knows to make them more knowable to the world. Working with the notion that documentary photography is still understood as having a special one-to-one relationship with the real, lived experience, then what he would like to do is have us cut a small 4"x6" hole in the wall to your office. In this way he is rendering visible you as a subject/object to your own MCAD community. The hole could be "framed" in some way and you would have control over how visible you would be on any given day.

Would you be open to talking with Mohamud about his request?

Thanks for entertaining this proposal.

Best regards,  
Kerry

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Hi Mohamud,

Good news!

Jay [said yes to your proposal, but] would like some sort of sound barrier, so installing some Plexi would make sense. He also wants to know where the hole might be. Do you have an idea in mind? I will have to touch base with Facilities about where they think there is the least likelihood of hitting anything important in the wall. There used to be a door in that wall that led to the President's office. No doubt there are some blueprints of what was done about 10 years ago in that hallway space.

Hope your install is going well at the mosque.

Thanks,  
Kerry

MCAD X MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN  
WHERE CREATIVITY MEETS PURPOSE

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jay Coogan  
Subject: Re: A question about upcoming fall exhibition The New Americans  
To: Kerry Morgan <>

Hi Kerry,

Let Mohamud know I am completely supportive of this idea. The only issue I have is sound both from outside coming in and inside going out. I would suggest that a piece of glass or plexiglass be part of the project so the sound issue is reduced or eliminated. I would also like to know where the hole will be placed and how long it will be there.

Also, I assume this needs to be run by Facilities as the hole will need to be repaired.

Jay  
JAY COOGAN  
President  
MCAD X MINNEAPOLIS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

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Hi Kerry,

This is wonderful news, thank you! And please pass my gratitude to Jay. At some point I would like to talk to him about the project and answer any questions or concerns he may have.

I am not sure where exactly the hole would be, but I would like Jay to also give some input as to where the hole needs to be as I would like to leave it up to him to decide what to reveal/cover.

I would like to encourage folks (via directions in the didactic) to look and engage with the opening and to observe/photograph (with phones and any photo devices they choose) whatever is revealed — without the experience being voyeuristic — to the extent that any engagement with art “object”/subject can allow or avoid.

I also agree with Jay about putting plexi for sound since I don't wish to interfere with his duties and privacy more than the opening can allow. I would like to consider the opening (when seen) as more of a set of (moving/still pictures) that can be viewed, first, with the eye, and with image capturing devices. I would like to make a set of 13 images through the hole over the run of the show for documentation.

I hope all this make sense. So far, my daydream titles are: 1. The president is in 2. On view, President Jay Coogan 3. Who is in charge 4. Who is afraid of Jay Coogan. I am sure once the show at the mosque is over and before the show is up I shall have an appropriate title.

Thank you,

Mohamud.

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Note: Feel free to look and/or take pictures. Share your thoughts @hundredmp & @mcaad with #windowintojay'soffice #whatuseisphotography