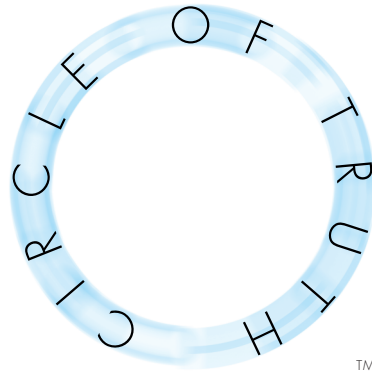


CURATED BY
LAURA HIPKE & SHANE GUFFOGG

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Ed Ruscha, Lita Albuquerque, and 47 other artists, each working in secret, collaborate in an inventive visual game of “Telephone”

The *Circle of Truth* is a wholly unique “collaboration” of 49 contemporary artists, each sequestered and unknown to one another, working in absolute secrecy. Taking a full six years from launch to fruition, the *Circle of Truth* is a modern, visual take on a common childhood classroom exercise, often referred to as the Rumor Circle or Telephone Game, wherein a secret message was whispered from student to student. The ensuing finale of this process typically bore no resemblance to the initial communication.

In the case of the *Circle of Truth*, the first painting created by co-curator Shane Guffogg, was delivered along with a blank canvas to the second artist in the *Circle*. This artist was not given the identity of the first artist. Her only instructions were to find *Truth* in the first painting and then use the blank canvas to create a work of art in response. When she was finished, her painting and a new blank canvas went on to the third artist, and the first painting went into storage. This methodology was repeated with each artist.

Participants were asked to keep the project secret until the *Circle* was complete. They did not sign their paintings, nor talk about the project with anyone. Each was asked to write an essay about his or her experience. These essays can be found in the exhibition catalog and on this website in the Art & Essays tab. Excerpts of the essays will be available for visitors to view during the exhibition.

What transpired over the course of the project – what Truths were discovered and explored, how each artist was affected – broadened the scope of the *Circle of Truth* from an interesting exploration of sensitivity and creativity, into an unexpected examination of what *Truth* means sociologically and spiritually.

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The Art

The 49 works of art were created specifically for the *Circle of Truth* by 49 different and often disparate artists. Mostly oil paintings, all of the works measure 20 inches square by 2 inches deep, and will be wall hung in chronological order. Please refer to the book mock-up for visual representations of the works.

Addressing contemporary issues

The *Circle of Truth* project opens a dialog regarding the nature of what we consider *Truth* to be, and even whether we think it exists. Of course as intelligent beings we understand the potential of rumors and the inherent flaws of receiving and retransmitting information. But few give more than a shake of the head in response. The *Circle of Truth* allows the viewer to witness each and every change in the seed of *Truth*.

Which brings us back to the ultimate question, “What is *Truth*?” How do people in our society feel about their access to *Truth*? What is our responsibility to preserve *Truth*? Is *Truth* still important or even relevant? How does the subtle erosion of our confidence in *Truth* affect our sense of wellbeing? The exhibition touches on a need that resonates deeply in the human psyche – access to meaningful, truthful contact with others. This truthful contact is the secret ingredient in the *Circle of Truth* project.

Using paint and words the artists speak to the viewers candidly, providing a rare perspective into their experience and thought processes. The accompanying book, with its sequential layout and essays by the artists, will provide a lasting record that visitors can take home.

Accessible to all

Viewers of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities and levels of education will be able to quickly understand and appreciate the meaning of the *Circle of Truth*. There are no prerequisites or any fundamental knowledge needed to appreciate and recognize *Truth*. The *Circle* relies simply on the viewers’ inherent human nature. The project provides many levels of interest, from superficial amusement, to existential explorations.

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The scholarship of contemporary art and art history

The *Circle of Truth* project is a microcosm of contemporary art, encompassing many artistic styles. It pushes beyond the post-modernist era, where all styles are relevant – from hyper-realism, to pop, to pure abstraction with the myriad overlapping styles which reside between.

The *Circle of Truth* project is a nostalgic nod to the Exquisite Corpse game of the surrealists of the early 20th Century, where artists came together to collaborate on an unknown and unpredictable outcome. The *Circle of Truth* will be remembered as a moment when generosity, goodwill and courage came together to make something bigger than the individual, while inviting the viewer to be an integral part of the outcome.

Facilitating community interaction and collaboration through programming and partnerships

The topic of *Truth* and its importance in the context of modern human experience is especially meaningful. The Rumor Game can be employed in a variety of creative ways to foster immersive and participatory experiences in the community, schools and via social media.

We will develop and design printed materials to assist and encourage visitors to the Museum to play the Rumor Game in small groups.

Each of the 49 artists and the curators have a wealth of experiences to share about their time with the *Circle of Truth* project. We feel these experiences would translate well into interesting speaking events with some of the artists. Audiences would be asked to play the Rumor Game at the beginning of speaking events.

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Exhibit marketing

There are a number of ways to promote this exhibition:

1. Through the concept of the exhibition, the subject of *Truth* in the human experience
2. Through the multiple styles and techniques used by 49 artists
3. Through the names of the more established artists in the project
4. Through social media and community versions of the Rumor Game

Exhibit installation

The 49 works of art will be wall hung in a straight forward manner. Each of the 49 works in the exhibition were created within the borders of 20x20 inch aluminum strainers that will be hung in chronological order. Some artists removed the linen canvas to create their contribution using the framework of the aluminum strainers, but most used the linen as the foundation of their work. The pieces are not heavy and do not require any special preparation to be installed.

The exhibition can be presented to the public, in one of two ways, depending upon budget:

1. The project will consume approximately 165 linear feet of space and could make use of an existing interior space in the museum. The 49 paintings would be hung in chronological order approximately 20 inches apart – ideally with excerpts from the artists' essays on wall labels between the paintings.
2. Alternatively, the exhibit could be viewed in a circular structure. Architect Christoph Kapeller, best known for his work on Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the Library in Alexandria Egypt, has done preliminary drawings of an installation structure for the exhibition. We would like to work with the Venue to make this option a reality by securing sponsors to underwrite the cost of construction.

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Shipping

Because the 49 works that make up the exhibition are relatively small and housed in Los Angeles, shipping expenses should be quite manageable.

The Exhibition Catalog

The hardbound, 130-page exhibition catalog will be printed and ready for the exhibition. We ask that the book be made available to visitors in the venue's bookstore, if applicable.

Our Sponsors

We are very grateful to the sponsors who supported our project from the onset. We will need to make sure their support is recognized in some way, though we will be looking to the venue for guidance as to the appropriate ways to do so.

1. The Lucius Hudson Company provided the 49 linen canvases
2. Enigma | LA provided the design of the book
3. Art Works Fine Art Publishing provided all of the digital capture of the art
4. Curatorial Assistance provided the shipping crate that was used to ship the art to and from each artist's studio
5. CK-Architecture is willing to provide design and supervision of a circular exhibit structure

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Participating Artists (chronological)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Shane Guffogg | 14. Ron Griffin | 26. Andy Moses | 39. Christopher Monger |
| 2. Lisa Adams | 15. Doro Hofmann | 27. Tim Isham | 40. Todd Williamson |
| 3. Margaret Lazzari | 16. Paul Ruscha | 28. Cheryl Ekstrom | 41. Jimi Gleason |
| 4. Jim Morphesis | 17. Randall Cabe | 29. Greg Colson | 42. Mark Licari |
| 5. Alison Van Pelt | 18. Rhea Carmi | 30. Alex Gross | 43. Virginia Broersma |
| 6. Matthew Thomas | 19. Dan Lutzick | 31. Gary Panter | 44. Bruce Richards |
| 7. John Scane | 20. Daniel Peacock | 32. Justin Bower | 45. Rives Granade |
| 8. Michelle Weinstein | 21. Susan McDonnell | 33. Lita Albuquerque | 46. Robert Williams |
| 9. Vonn Sumner | 22. Lynn Hanson | 34. Kim Abeles | 47. Cal Lane |
| 10. Ruth Weisberg | 23. Michael Rosenfeld | 35. Deborah Martin | 48. Lisa Bartleson |
| 11. Stanley Dorfman | 24. Bari Kumar | 36. Jeff Colson | 49. Ed Ruscha |
| 12. Kim Kimbro | 25. Juan Carlos Munoz
Hernandez | 37. Eddie Ruscha | |
| 13. Charles Arnoldi | | 38. Billy Al Bengston | |

Contact

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The contents of this proposal are proprietary, confidential, and intended solely for the recipient. The descriptions, specifications and details of this document, and the *Circle of Truth* concept, may not be divulged or shared with third parties without the express, written consent of Laura Hipke and Shane Guffogg.

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