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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION:

## **Amboy**

**Frances Scholz & Mark von Schlegell**  
**September 10–November 21, 2015**

Curated by Jamie Stevens

**San Francisco, Calif., July 1, 2015**—The CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts in San Francisco will present the premiere of a new film project by Cologne-based artists Frances Scholz (b. 1962, Washington, DC) and Mark von Schlegell (b. 1967, New York), September 10–November 21. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Scholz and von Schlegell will premiere their ambitious project *Amboy*, a horror film. Scholz, a painter and filmmaker, edited, shot, and directed the film in a number of semi-improvised sequences cowritten and coproduced with art theorist and science fiction author von Schlegell, incorporating an expansive cast of actors and collaborators from the worlds of art, film, music, and literature. The film charts the journey of an artist–filmmaker who is led astray from her attempts to make a documentary in Los Angeles by the mysterious history of a deceased male artist named Amboy. Scholz and von Schlegell invited a number of musicians—including Stephen Malkmus, Holy Shit, and Kath Bloom—to provide *Amboy*'s soundtrack, which at times is performed on camera, in proximity to the film's narrative action. Actors in *Amboy* include Paul Giamatti, Eleanor Antin, Penny Arcade, Chris Kraus, Andrea Fraser, Marjorie Perloff, and Colm Tóibín.

*Amboy* interlaces passages of genuine documentary (for instance, segments feature Lydia van Vogt, widow of the celebrated sci-fi writer A.E. van Vogt) with carefully scripted and acted sequences that serve the loose narrative arc of the film. *Amboy*'s storyline is expressed with a disorienting array of cinematic strategies taken from feature films, documentaries, B movies, and home video→ style recordings. The conflation of these approaches takes place in an exhibition environment: one that includes photographic prints and readymade objects taken from the actual location of Amboy, a ghost town in the Mojave desert that serves as the central location of the film. *Amboy* is both an allegorical figure and a geographical site: a vector by which the film proceeds, interrupts itself, transmits its story, and unspools its own making in the same filmic time and space. Throughout the footage in *Amboy*, a sense of documentary remains in even the most fantastical scenes (or, as Scholz puts it, "reality fucks with fiction"), and the viewer is left with a document of the film's process as well as the fabrications and drama of its plot.

Full cast: Chris Kraus, Paul Giamatti, Lydia van Vogt, Leslie Allison, Matt Fishbeck, Lily Benson, Mark von Schlegell, Andrea Fraser, Penny Arcade, Jessica Jackson Hutchins, Stephen Malkmus, Lottie Jackson Malkmus, Sunday Malkmus, Juliet McIver, Niklaus Hirsch, Noura Wedell, Colm Tóibín, Gracie DeVito, Berry Levin, Claire Evans, Ruben Diaz, Bec Ullrich, Robert Kinberg, Sergej Jensen, Eleanor Antin, Douglas Messerli, Sarah Lehrer Grawler, Jeff Hassay, Frances Scholz, Laura Owens, Kim Mitseff, Bec Ulrich, Rubin Diaz, Tif Sigfrids, , Alaina Claire Feldman, Magnus Schäfer, Sophie von Olfers, Brian Mann, Claire Evans, Keenan Jay, Kath Bloom.

Music: Holy Shit, Stephen Malkmus, Cross, Rabbi Milkblood, Sergej Jensen, Barry Salaberry, Kath Bloom. Frances Scholz and Mark von Schlegell last collaborated on the episodic film *Starlite*, which was commissioned by the artist Cosima von Bonin as a component of her exhibition tour throughout Europe between 2011 and 2012. *Starlite* was, among others, screened at Chisenhale Gallery, London (2011); Museum Ludwig, Cologne (2012); and MOCA, Los Angeles (2013).

Frances Scholz lives and works in Cologne. Recent exhibitions include *20 Years*, Halle für Kunst, Lüneburg, (2015); *China City*, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne (2012); *Dystopia*, CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain de Bordeaux (2011); and *Rom Report*, Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2008). Scholz is professor of painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Braunschweig.

Mark von Schlegell's stories and essays appear regularly in underground newspapers, zines, art books, and periodicals the world over. *Venusia*, his first novel, was honor-listed for the 2007 James M. Tiptree Jr. Prize in science fiction. He is currently on the faculty at Städelschule, Frankfurt, where he directed a student production of *Hamlet* (2011), an homage to Jack Smith at Portikus.

### **About the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts**

CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts is a nonprofit exhibition venue and research institute dedicated to contemporary art. It was founded in 1998 at California College of the Arts in San Francisco. The Wattis Institute is a place for showing art and for thinking about art. We spend time with artists and pay close attention to their ideas.

As an exhibition space, we commission and show new work by artists from around the world. As a research institute, we dedicate six months to reflecting on the work of a single artist, which informs a regular series of public events, texts, and research by other relevant artists and thinkers. The Wattis Institute is a headquarters for contemporary art and ideas for everyone in the Bay Area. For more information about the Wattis Institute, visit [wattis.org](http://wattis.org).

### **About California College of the Arts**

Founded in 1907, California College of the Arts (CCA) offers 22 undergraduate and 13 graduate programs in the areas of fine arts, architecture, design, and writing. The college offers BFA, BA, MFA, MA, MBA, BArch, MArch, MAAD, and MDes degrees. For more information about CCA, visit [cca.edu](http://cca.edu).

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

September 10–November 21, 2015

Amboy

Frances Scholz & Mark von Schlegell

Location: CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, 360 Kansas Street (between 16th and 17th Streets), San Francisco

Opening reception: Thursday, September 10, 2015, 7–9 p.m.

Gallery hours: Tues.–Fri., noon–7 p.m.; Sat., noon–5 p.m.; closed Sun. and Mon.

Cost: Free

Information: 415.355.9673, [cca.edu](http://cca.edu), [wattis.org](http://wattis.org)

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