

**STANDARD
SPACE**

**Rachel Frank:
Landscapes of the Future Past**

Curated by Jessica Slaven

January 27 – March 4th, 2018
Opening: Saturday, January 27th,
5:30 – 8:00 pm



Standard Space is pleased to present **Landscapes of the Future Past**, a solo show by Rachel Frank. **Landscapes of the Future Past** explores man's relationship to the environment and to other species in the epoch of the Anthropocene, the geological period in which we are currently living, by imagining how our contemporary environmental understanding and practices can be informed by past ecosystems, ancient structures, and historical objects.

Scientists define the Anthropocene by the profound alteration of the earth's geologic and environmental processes due to human activity. Frank's ongoing environmentally concerned projects combine sculpture, video, and performance to investigate the growing tensions between the natural world and the manmade, the animal and the political, the past and the present. Through both personal memory and natural history, Frank's work presents an expansive vision of deep time and the epochal shifts, transitions, and ruptures in our historical and contemporary landscape.

The beaded panels from Frank's **Pattern for a Yurt** series frame the exhibition's themes and question how past forms might be contemplated in response to today's Anthropocentric conditions. Historically, the yurt served as both a functional, nomadic dwelling and a symbolic bridge between the cosmos and human: a physical guide for interactions with an unknown future. With the displacement of mass populations due to environmental changes and economic forces, these panels conjure the possibility of nomadic structures that might be protective and transformative.

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Frank's video work, **Vessels**, continues a narrative begun in its companion piece, **Vapors**, in which actors wearing sculpted masks of animals from the last great wave of extinctions serve as both guides into the past and reminders of the crisis facing countless species today. Sculptural elements from Frank's ongoing video series complement the video as stand-alone sculptural objects. Masks of a woolly rhino and giant sloth serve as synecdoches for the extinct megafauna, who formerly roamed the earth before perishing due to dramatic changes in climate. Standing adjacent, a series of ceramic rhyton sculptures allude to the historical ways man sought to divine the future and hold influence over natural processes. Based on an ancient Eurasian ceramic vessel and prominently featured in **Vessels**, the original rhytons typically mimicked animal shapes and held liquids for consumption or ritualistic ceremonies performed to influence the gods. In Frank's video, by contrast, the rhytons are seen rhythmically filling and draining against the ebb and flow of tides brought about by rising sea levels.

Sculptures and photos documenting Frank's site-specific performances investigate the concept of **Rewilding**, the environmental practice of reintroducing species to landscapes where they had formerly thrived to repair ecosystems and increase sustainability. Focusing on keystone species such as the American bison and the oyster, these works seek to engage with the landscapes' memories and thematize the roles natural actors may play in offsetting the damage done by human development and industrialization.

RACHEL FRANK BIO

Born and raised in Kentucky, Rachel Frank received her BFA from The Kansas City Art Institute and her MFA from The University of Pennsylvania. Frank is the recipient of grants from The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, The Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation, The Puffin Foundation, and The Franklin Furnace Archive. She has attended residencies at Yaddo, The Marie Walsh Sharpe Foundation, The Museum of Arts and Design, the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, and The Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Her performance pieces have been shown at HERE, Socrates Sculpture Park, The Select Fair, and The Bushwick Starr in New York City, The Marran Theater at Lesley University, and most recently at The Watermill Center in collaboration with Robert Wilson. Recent solo shows include the SPRING/BREAK Art Show and Thomas Hunter Projects at Hunter College, both in New York City in 2017. She has an upcoming residency at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tucson, AZ and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

More information can be found at: <http://www.rachelfrank.com>