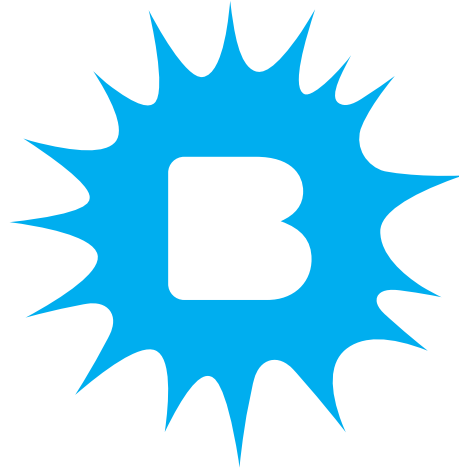


# Press Release



April 2011

## **Contemporary Artist Matthew Buckingham Explores Life and Work of Mary Wollstonecraft in Video Installation in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art**

New York artist Matthew Buckingham, whose work examines social memory and historical representation, focuses on the eighteenth-century writer and advocate for women Mary Wollstonecraft in an exhibition to be presented in the Herstory Gallery of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art. *Matthew Buckingham: The Spirit and the Letter*, (2007), a video installation, will be on view from September 3, 2011, through January 8, 2012.

The Herstory Gallery is devoted to the remarkable contributions of the women named in *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago, on permanent view in the adjacent gallery. Mary Wollstonecraft, the pioneering philosopher and writer on women's rights, is celebrated with one of the thirty-nine place settings in Chicago's iconic feminist work.

*The Spirit and the Letter* presents excerpts from Mary Wollstonecraft's writing, mainly from her important treatise, *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, published in London in 1792, but material is also drawn from a number of her books, letters, memoirs, and tracts, including *The Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790). The text, compiled and edited by Buckingham, is spoken as a monologue by an actor in the video component of the installation.

Mary Wollstonecraft, born in London in 1759, is best known for *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in which she passionately asserted the equality of the sexes and demonstrated through her own intellectual rigor that women are not inferior to men. The essay, the earliest known treatise on the subject, has been viewed as the foundation of the modern women's rights movements in the Western world. During her brief and unconventional life, Wollstonecraft wrote novels, treatises, a travel narrative, a history of the French Revolution (which she viewed first-hand), and a children's book. Wollstonecraft died at 38, days after giving birth to a daughter, named Mary in her honor, who would become Mary Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein*.

Utilizing photography, film, video, audio, writing, and drawing, Matthew Buckingham's work questions the role that social memory plays in contemporary life and encourage viewers to question what is most familiar to them. His works have investigated matters as disparate as the indigenous past and present in the Hudson River Valley and the inception of the first English dictionary.

## **Brooklyn Museum**

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Born in Iowa in 1963, Buckingham lives and works in New York City. He has had solo exhibitions at the Museum Moderner Kunst, Vienna; the Dallas Museum of Art; the St. Louis Art Museum; the Lunds Konsthall; the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen; the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Artpace, San Antonio; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver; and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid.

*Matthew Buckingham: The Spirit and the Letter* has been organized by Catherine Morris, Curator of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum.

Matthew Buckingham's project *The Spirit and the Letter* was co-commissioned by Film and Video Umbrella and Camden Arts Centre in association with the Des Moines Art Center, Dundee Contemporary Art, FRAC Bourgogne and the Henry Art Gallery with support from the Arts Council of England.

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#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

##### **Admission:**

Contribution \$10; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$6. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

##### **Museum Hours:**

Wednesday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; first Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

##### **Directions:**

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B41, B69, B48.  
On-site parking available.

**Brooklyn Museum Extended Hours:** The Brooklyn Museum is now open to the public eight additional hours a week and will open each day at 11 a.m.

- Wednesdays 11-6
- Thursdays and Fridays 11-10
- Saturdays and Sundays 11-6

The Museum continues to present *Target First Saturdays*, its popular free evening of art and entertainment, when it remains open until 11 p.m. the first Saturday of each month except September.