



For Immediate Release: UCCS Galleries of Contemporary Art announces visiting artist collective Environmental Performance Agency (EPA), free public lecture and exhibition opening at GOCA Downtown | Contact(s): Daisy McGowan, dmcgowan@uccs.edu; Michaela Steen msteen2@uccs.edu, 719.255.3504



Colorado Springs, Colorado - UCCS Galleries of Contemporary Art announces a public lecture by visiting artist collective Environmental Performance Agency (EPA) and the opening of a new exhibition at GOCA Downtown. The Visiting Artists & Critics Series lecture will take place on Tuesday, September 28, 2021, 5 – 6 p.m. at the Chapman Recital Hall, Ent Center for the

Arts -- pre-registration is requested but not required. Registration link here:

<https://tickets.entcenterforthearts.org/overview/2839>

The exhibition opens on Friday, October 1, 2021 with a reception from 5 – 8 p.m. as part of the Colorado Springs Downtown Partnership First Friday Art Walk event at 121 S. Tejon Street, Plaza of the Rockies. The exhibition will be on view through October 29, 2021, and admission for all events and regular gallery hours is free and open to all. The exhibition features a new project by the Environmental Performance Agency collective, working with UCCS faculty and students during an artistic residency at GOCA Downtown. All events are free of charge, as is regular gallery admission.

Per UCCS guidelines, masks are required indoors at all GOCA spaces. The gallery is open to the public Friday - Sunday, 12 – 6 p.m. through October 29; visits by advance appointment are welcomed, email gallery@uccs.edu to arrange or www.GOCAdigital.org to learn more.

The Environmental Performance Agency (EPA) is an artist collective founded in 2017 and named in response to the ongoing rollback of Federal environmental policy at the US Environmental Protection Agency. Appropriating the acronym EPA, the collective's primary goal is to shift thinking around the terms environment, performance, and agency – using artistic, social, and embodied / kinesthetic practices to advocate for the agency of all living performers co-creating our environment, specifically through the lens of spontaneous urban plants, native or migrant. Current EPA Agents include Catherine Grau, andrea haenggi, Ellie Irons, Christopher Kennedy, and the spontaneous urban plants of New York City.

Undesirable Plants Declare: A Participatory Public Review

*Undesirable Plants Declare** brings the Environmental Performance Agency's work to the unceded territory of the Ute, Cheyenne, Arapaho Peoples, to investigate the diverse multispecies lifeways and teachings of spontaneous urban plants (aka weeds). Asking "In a time of ongoing pandemic crisis, how do we revalue what care means for all living beings?", the exhibition shares and extends the EPA's Multispecies Care Survey, a public engagement and data gathering initiative that aims to cultivate the co-generation of embodied, localized plant-human care practices. Launched during the height of the COVID-19 crisis, the Survey is an interactive web platform (multispecies.care) featuring a collection of participatory methods for attuning to vegetal perspectives and working with spontaneous urban plants as guides, collaborators, and mentors while social distancing. In the exhibition's archive space, visitors can view video documentation of entries collected during the 2020-21 Survey cycle, explore the survey directly, and actively participate by engaging in a new protocol developed for this exhibition.

In the entryway to the gallery, visitors are introduced to a delegation of EPA weedy plant experts from New York City, and invited to assist the EPA in assessing the capabilities and wisdom of

local “undesirable” plant expert Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*). Through this Public Review with Knapweed, the EPA asks: What are the qualities, perspectives, skills, and relations that Knapweed can bring to the EPA? Participate in public fieldwork by listening, observing, and moving with urban plants, then share your sensorial experiences and Knapweed knowledge on the collaborative Public Review Diagram in the gallery.

The EPA will ultimately use this research in drafting a new piece of policy, The Multispecies Act. This Act aims to offer a set of embodied, actionable principles for centering spontaneous urban plant life as one means (among many) of contending with the failure of our environmental regulatory apparatus to deliver policy that promotes reciprocal relations between human and nonhuman life. -

* The term “undesirable plant” comes from the Colorado Springs Code of Ordinances, section [“9.6.314 Undesirable Plant Management.”](#) which identifies Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*), Diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*), Russian knapweed (*Centaurea repens*), Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*), and Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) as undesirable weeds located on public, private or city land, and subject to control or eradication (In accord with Colorado Revised Statutes section 35-5.5-108). “Control” means preventing an undesirable plant from forming viable seeds or vegetative propagules. Those who harbor or maintain undesirable plants are declared to be a public nuisance.

GOCA is a regional hub of contemporary art, culture, and conversation. By featuring world-class artists, hosting artist and expert talks, and offering meaningful events, GOCA engages UCCS students, faculty, staff and Pikes Peak Region community members in contemporary culture and life. GOCA is a contemporary arts organization with two galleries, in the Ent Center for the Arts and a satellite downtown location operated since 2010 in the Plaza of the Rockies building.

The University of Colorado Colorado Springs, located on Austin Bluffs Parkway in Colorado Springs, is one of the fastest growing universities in Colorado. The University offers 37 bachelor’s degrees, 19 master’s and five doctoral degrees. UCCS enrolls more than 11,000 students on campus annually and another 2,000 in online programs. For more information, visit www.uccs.edu