

K-State News

Beach Museum of Art invites public to learn about, engage with Manhattan Community Portrait project

Thursday, March 28, 2024



The Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art will host a public presentation on the "Manhattan Community Portrait," a social art project meant to foster connection within the community, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 5, at Union Hall, 328 Poyntz Ave. | [Download this photo. \(/media/images/mar24/MHK-community-portrait-image.jpg\)](/media/images/mar24/MHK-community-portrait-image.jpg)

MANHATTAN — An upcoming presentation will give Manhattan residents the opportunity to look deeply into the faces of their neighbors and explore the connections between individuals that build community.

The [Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art \(https://beach.k-state.edu/\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/) at Kansas State University invites the public to join guest artist Susie J. Lee for a [public presentation \(https://events.k-state.edu/event/manhattan_community_portrait_public_presentation?utm_campaign=widget&utm_medium=widget&utm_source=Events\)](https://events.k-state.edu/event/manhattan_community_portrait_public_presentation?utm_campaign=widget&utm_medium=widget&utm_source=Events) on the "[Manhattan Community Portrait \(https://beach.k-state.edu/explore/ubiquitous-bma/manhattan-community-portrait.html\)](https://beach.k-state.edu/explore/ubiquitous-bma/manhattan-community-portrait.html)" project from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 5, at Union Hall, 328 Poyntz Ave.

Media contact

Division of Communications and Marketing
785-532-2535
media@k-state.edu
([mailto:media@k-state.edu?](mailto:media@k-state.edu?subject=)
[subject=](mailto:media@k-state.edu?subject=))

Website

Beach Museum of Art
(<https://beach.k-state.edu/>)

Photo

[Download the following photo. \(/media/images/mar24/Susie-Lee.jpg\)](/media/images/mar24/Susie-Lee.jpg)



Susie J. Lee, a celebrated artist whose work explores intimacy, time and connection through technology, will be a guest speaker for the Beach Museum of Art's public presentation on the Manhattan Community Portrait art project on April 5.

Created by Beach Museum of Art specialist Nate McClendon, the "Manhattan Community Portrait" is a social art project grounded in the belief that every individual possesses a unique story to share and seeks to promote personal connections through the inclusion of a narrative provided by each subject.

Every month, a collection of portraits is updated on the walls of the Beach Museum of Art, with each portrait telling a unique and powerful story. These portraits will later be installed at various locations throughout Manhattan — from doctors' offices to coffee shops — to serve as poignant reminders that every face belongs to a real person, with their own dreams, struggles and triumphs.

"This is an exciting and important project," said Kent Michael Smith, director of the Beach Museum of Art. "After everything we all have endured over the last few years, these video portraits encourage us all to slow down, look another Manhattanite in the eyes and truly see each other again. A renewed sense of belonging and empathy for our neighbor — both known and unknown — is an outcome we strive to achieve."

Lee is a practicing artist whose work explores intimacy, time and connection through technology. Recognized as Emerging Artist of the Year for the "intelligence, emotion and sensuality" of her work, Lee has focused on the amplification of genuine and spontaneous human connection through technology.

McClendon's project takes inspiration from Lee's "Fracking Fields" 2013 video portrait series, in which she explored the world of fracking to shine a light on the small-town, blue-collar stories of oil workers who wondered to her out loud why anyone would care about their stories. One of those video portraits, "Jake," is currently on display at the Beach Museum of Art.

Lee — a graduate of Yale, Columbia and University of Washington with degrees in molecular biophysics and biochemistry, education, and fine arts — has a unique background as a scientist, educator, entrepreneur, single mother and artist that feeds into a restless intellectual curiosity that is ultimately grounded in a strong sense of vocation to positively change the world in a concrete manner.

The public presentation April 5 will feature interviews with both Lee and McClendon, as well as interactive experiences to explore the ways Manhattan residents see each other as a community.

Major support for the project is provided by Art Bridges Foundation, a nonprofit organization that works with museums across the country to increase local access to great American art. Union Hall in Manhattan serves as the local sponsor for the social art project.

For more information, contact Nate McClendon at ncm@k-state.edu (<http://ncm@k-state.edu>).