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K-State News

National Geographic's Jim Richardson, international artist Zhang Hongtu to serve inaugural residencies at new Prairie Studies Institute

Monday, Sept. 30, 2019



Zhang Hongtu's "Bison and Cranes, After the Emperor Huizong of Song 907 Years Later," a 70-by-67-inch oil and acrylic on canvas from 2019. Image is courtesy of the artist. | [Download this photo.](#)

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MANHATTAN — An internationally recognized artist and an acclaimed photojournalist will be the inaugural residents of a new institute established to promote understanding of the tallgrass prairie and the Flint Hills region through dialogue and collaborations that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries.

The Prairie Studies Institute is a collaboration of the [Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art](https://www.beach.k-state.edu/) (<https://www.beach.k-state.edu/>) at Kansas State University and the Volland Foundation. The institute was created to connect visual and performing artists, writers, musicians, scientists and historians to generate unexpected conversations and perspectives about the prairie's ecosystems, natural history and cultural richness, said Linda Duke, director of the Beach Museum of Art.

"Beginning this fall, the Prairie Studies Institute will offer a biennial program to engage the community and build connections through a variety of activities, such as artist and scholar residencies, talks, readings, performances, exhibitions and more," Duke said.

The first pair of Prairie Studies Institute residents are artist Zhang Hongtu and photojournalist Jim Richardson. Through public programs, Zhang and Richardson will discuss their interest in the tallgrass prairie in terms of history, ecology, agriculture and culture.

Recent landscapes by Zhang, who is based in New York and has had exhibitions in Asia, Europe and America, contemplate the impact of human activity on nature and native animals. His first visit to Kansas, made in 2018 for an exhibition of his work at the Beach Museum of Art, inspired the artist to work on a new series of artworks featuring bison and prairie.

Richardson, who lives in **Lindsborg**, has published photographic essays in National Geographic for almost three decades. A major part of his work focuses on the people and land of the prairie, as well as agriculture and food production in the Midwest and abroad. Richardson's work was featured in a 2016 Beach Museum of Art exhibition. He has received several honors for his distinguished career, including an honorary doctorate from K-State in 2017.

The following events, all open to the public, are part of Richardson and Zhang's residency with the Prairie Studies Institute:

- Richardson and Zhang will have a conversation about the "Hungry Heartland" exhibition at the Volland Store Gallery at 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 6, at the Volland Store, which is near **Alma**.
- "Zhang Hongtu: New Yorker on the Prairie" will be a presentation by Zhang on his current work in progress, a new series on bison and prairie. The event will be at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, at the Beach Museum of Art. A reception will follow the presentation.
- "Public Conversation: The Anthropocene Prairie," with Zhang, Richardson and Dennis Dimick, a noted journalist, photographer, presenter and educator, will be at 4 p.m. Monday, Oct. 14, in 101 Thompson Hall, which is adjacent to the Beach Museum of Art on the K-State campus. Related to this event will be Dimick's Henry C. Gardiner Global Food Systems Lecture, "Living in the Human Age," at 7 p.m. Oct. 14 in K-State's McCain Auditorium.

Source

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News tip

Alma, Lindsborg and Manhattan

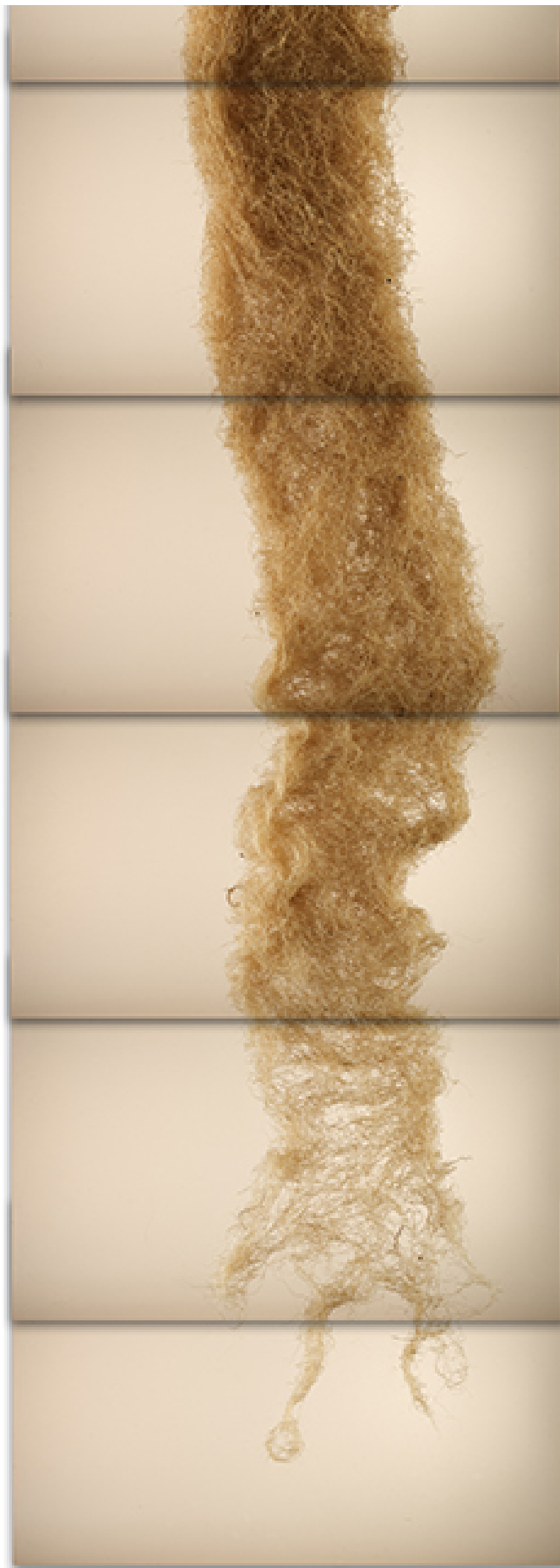
Website

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

Photo

Download the following photo. (/media/images/sept19/western_wheatgrass.jpg)





[\(/media/images/sept19/western_wheatgrass-sm2.jpg\)](/media/images/sept19/western_wheatgrass-sm2.jpg)

Part of the Beach Museum of Art collection, "Western Wheatgrass (Kernza)" is an inkjet on paper by Jim Richardson.