

The Legal Medium: Art and Law in the United States



Lowell Darling at his solo exhibition, *CFR-11: Lowell Darling invites you to run yourself for president*, Sonoma Museum for the Visual Arts, Sonoma, Calif., reproduced in Paula Harris, "Oh My Darling: Renegade artist runs conceptual campaign," *Northern California Bohemian*, January 4-10, 2001.

Date: 13 October, 2020 (Tuesday)

Time: 2:30PM - 4:00PM

Zoom Meeting ID: 976 7629 6613

Passcode: 311411

Abstract:

This talk examines a set of historic contact zones between art and law that take place within the regulative framework of the United States and its international relations. Artists ranging from Constantin Brancusi and Marcel Duchamp to Lowell Darling, Mary Ellen Carroll, and Paolo Woods and Gabriele Galimberti have used law as a creative material. They have altered the legal definition of "art," frustrated zoning and land use rules disproportionately benefiting corporate development over public housing, subverted electoral regulations favoring the wealthy and tax guidelines punishing the poor, and even activated loopholes in both tax law and immigration procedures. At the core of these projects is a basic understanding of bureaucracy: the denser and more detailed the law on the books, the more rules there are to exploit in technically valid yet subversive and socially progressive ways. By considering how artists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have sculpted law as an expressive material, one might begin to better understand how creative practice interacts and interferes with the norms and regulating systems that permeate the American experience.

Speaker:

Dr Monica Lee Steinberg is an Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of Hong Kong. She earned a PhD in Art History from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Her writing has appeared in exhibition catalogs, edited volumes, and journals such as *American Art*, *Archives of American Art*, and *Oxford Art Journal*.

Zoom Link

