

# The Stamp Gallery

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Media Contact

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## BALTIMORE-BASED ARTISTS ADAM HOLOFCENER AND ANTONIO MCAFEE DIALOGUE IN SOUND AND PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE STAMP GALLERY THIS FALL

Opening Reception Free and Open to the Public **Tuesday, November 1, 6–9 pm**



Left to right: Antonio McAfee, *The Abrupt Unmaking*, 2011, Digital C-Print; Adam Holofcener, *Upresting*, 2015–2016, Quadrophonic Sound Installation; Antonio McAfee, *The Trickster (Beginning Transition)*, 2011, Digital C-Print.

**College Park, MD**—In *Black Maths*, Baltimore-based artists Adam Holofcener and Antonio McAfee use sound recordings and photography to investigate the complex equations by which the past operates on the present. This two-artist exhibition initiates a dialogue between Holofcener's quadrophonic sound installation *Upresting* (2015–2016) and McAfee's photographic *Counter-Archive Project* (2011–present). *Black Maths* is on view at the Stamp Gallery at the University of Maryland, College Park, from October 31 through December 10, 2016.

*Upresting* brings together field recordings from protests of the Baltimore Uprising of April and May 2015. Holofcener channels the audio footage into a sound environment that simulates shifting acoustical sensations as a protester's body moves about a crowd and through a city. Chanting, street noise, musical performance, and sounds of military equipment swell in a numinous and disquieting experience. At the center of this intense, unpredictable aural situation, each visitor is invited to speak into a microphone and to hear their voice transform into a multitude.

*Counter-Archive Project* responds to a collection of 363 black-and-white photographs taken more than a century ago for *The Exhibition of American Negroes* organized by W.E.B. Dubois, Thomas Calloway, and Historic Black Colleges at the Paris 1900 International Exposition. McAfee selects images from this archive and subjects them to an array of formal and conceptual alterations, asking how the portraits' subjects might more fluidly represent themselves. Sitters switch places with architectural surroundings and fracture into collage. Their elements disappear, diffuse, double, reanimate, or render into 3D. Like *Upresting*, McAfee's images offer a deliberately unsettling experience, one that compels an intense and personal encounter with subjects that might feel otherwise remote.

Holofcener and McAfee's two bodies of work sample and rework recorded sounds and images that document human bodies in the process of expressing themselves, and representing each other as a collective, before the largest possible public. By manipulating and layering this source material, and then amplifying and recombining it in a shared space, *Black Maths* invites visitors to bring their own bodies to bear in an active, visceral encounter with themselves and across time.

### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Adam Holofcener** is a sound artist, composer, and performer from Baltimore, MD. His work ebbs and flows between digital and analog efforts with an emphasis on a synergistic interplay between the two: one informing the other, literally and otherwise, ad infinitum. The theoretical underpinnings of his work come from a variety of sources but primarily congeal around the personal and communal, ethical and existential mores of the body politic, engaging white privilege, domestic telecommunications policy, subprime mortgage loans, and copyright law. Holofcener has installed a quadrophonic sound installation in a vacant lot in West Baltimore, performed with a 200 guitar orchestra at Lincoln Center, and sent laptop vibrations through the PA systems of derelict establishments around the country. The medium shifts but the message does not. More information: [Upresting.com](http://Upresting.com)

**Antonio McAfee** is an artist living and working Baltimore, MD. McAfee received a BFA in Photography from the Corcoran College of Art and Design, an MFA from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Art and Culture Management from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. He currently teaches in the Art Department at Montgomery College. More information: [Antoniomcafee.net](http://Antoniomcafee.net)

### ABOUT THE ARTWORKS

Influenced by the complex, nuanced, unsettling, and numinous sonic effects attendant to a large scale protest or rally, **Adam Holofcener's *Upresting*** attempts to bottle the aural magic usually limited to those moments when thousands come together to pound the pavement for a common cause. The realities of a protest—like those conducted during the Baltimore Uprising in April and May 2015—unfold as the catalyst of sound (chanting, street noises, musical performance, military equipment) propels people forward toward a shared focal point, giving the voiceless a voice through the aggregation of many in a spiritual equivalent to the pooling together of small dollar donations. Outside a traditional protest or rally context, this awesome power can be difficult to manufacture or wield. Comprised of field recordings from the Baltimore Uprising (captured by the artist as well as by civil rights activist and educator DeRay Mckesson), *Upresting* filters a tapestry of those moments through a computer program, created by Holofcener using Max/MSP, to extricate the acoustic environment from its temporal constraints. Participants are encouraged to engage with the installation by using a microphone, and their own voices, to become a one-person protest. *Upresting* was initially made possible by Lots Alive, a grant program of the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts and the Baltimore Office of Sustainability.

**Antonio McAfee's *Counter-Archive Project*** addresses the complexity of representation. By appropriating and manipulating portraits, he engages prescribed views of individuals whose images he reworks to provide an alternate, more layered image and concept of those people depicted. His photographs oscillate between formal considerations (modifying appearances and prints) and imaginary potential (establishing new back stories and roles) for the portraits. McAfee's source for the *Counter-Archive Project* is a group of photographic portraits produced for *The Exhibition of American Negroes* organized by W.E.B. Dubois, Thomas Calloway, and Historic Black Colleges for the Paris 1900 International Exposition. The turn-of-the-20th-century exhibition sought to present a photographic, economic, and legislative survey of middle-class blacks in Georgia. Discussing her strong feelings in response to a photographic portrait of a Native

American family, the critic and activist Lucy Lippard has invoked the phrase *intersubjective time*. Despite all the differences between the family represented in the photo, the photographer, and Lippard herself—a century of elapsed time and respective ethnicities, genders, and classes—Lippard found herself developing a personal connection to the family rooted in how they were depicted. This feeling urged Lippard to conduct further research so as to inform herself of the specifics of the family’s life. McAfee keeps this experience and Lippard’s ideas close as he creates work that rests in the past even as it is filtered through his own experiences and artistic practice and shared with audiences who offer something new.

## **ABOUT THE STAMP GALLERY**

Located on the first floor of the Adele H. Stamp Student Union—Center for Campus Life at the University of Maryland, College Park, the Stamp Gallery is dedicated to exhibiting contemporary art, especially the work of emerging and mid-career artists. The Stamp Gallery supports contemporary art that is challenging, academically engaging, and attuned to broad community and social issues. Through meaningful exhibitions and programming, the Gallery offers outside-of-the-classroom experiential learning opportunities. It functions as a laboratory where emerging artists and curators experiment and work through their ideas. The Gallery’s programming aims to emphasize the importance of process to contemporary artistic practice and to provide a forum for dialogue.

FREE and open to the public: Mondays–Thursdays: 10 am–8 pm; Fridays: 10 am–6 pm; Saturdays: 11 am–4 pm; Sundays: Closed. More information: [thestamp.umd.edu/gallery](http://thestamp.umd.edu/gallery)

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