

NOW SPENCER
FINCH

CORCORAN
GALLERY OF ART • COLLEGE of ART + DESIGN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART LAUNCHES NEW CONTEMPORARY PROGRAM
INAUGURAL EXHIBITION TO OPEN IN SEPTEMBER**

Spencer Finch: My Business, with the Cloud
September 11, 2010–January 23, 2011



Spencer Finch, *Sunlight in an Empty Room (Passing Cloud for Emily Dickinson, Amherst, MA, August 28, 2004)*, 2004.
100 fluorescent lights, fixtures, filters, monofilament, and clothespins, dimensions variable. Courtesy of Galerie Nordenhake, Berlin. Photo: Luke Stettner.

WASHINGTON, DC—This fall, the Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design will launch its new contemporary program, *NOW at the Corcoran*, a series of one- and two-artist exhibitions that presents new work addressing issues central to the local, national, and global communities of Washington, D.C., and that responds to the collection, history, and architecture of the Corcoran.

NOW at the Corcoran will open with an exhibition of new work by Brooklyn-based artist Spencer Finch. Finch's sculptural installations, photographs, and drawings seek to capture the elusive space between perception and the outside world, probing the intersections of science, nature, and memory. Using industrial materials to recreate individual experiences or particular sensations such as candlelight or the wind off of Walden Pond, he often draws from historical accounts by poets and philosophers to explore the persistence of human curiosity. Finch's works play with light, color, and time to remind his viewers that looking is never as simple as it looks.

Finch's exhibition at the Corcoran takes up the subject of clouds. Drawing from the history and environment of Washington, D.C., his project explores the poetic, physical, and meteorological aspects of these natural phenomena.

Passing Cloud, 2010, is a site-specific sculpture made for the Corcoran's Rotunda that alludes to a moment on a summer's day in 1863 when Walt Whitman and Abraham Lincoln crossed paths.



“The new work Spencer Finch is creating for the Corcoran's Rotunda is integrally tied to Washington. It is about specific events that took place here but also about what draws people to the city and the desire to experience history. *Passing Cloud* recreates the light of a passing cloud at Vermont and L Streets, where the poet watched for the President to ride by on horseback. It explores the individual, changeable nature of experience and, ultimately, how such experiences become part of our collective history,” said Sarah Newman, curator of contemporary art at the Corcoran.

“*Passing Cloud* is a kind of 'anti-monument' to these two great historical figures. Instead of solidifying an idea of the past in stone, Finch's cloud is a dynamic and changing environment that tries to

capture a living, breathing moment in time. The work is about the impulse to experience history firsthand, by Whitman, by Finch, and by visitors to Washington, D.C. It is also about the way that history is always experienced individually, and how such moments are as fleeting as they are memorable,” Newman said.

The second part of the exhibition, in one of the museum's second floor galleries, is a rigorous examination of the different ways we can know a cloud—through scientific analysis, through observation, and through metaphor. In a selection of drawings, photographs, and sculpture, Finch attempts to make something solid out of air, and investigates the atmospheric properties and poetic possibilities of light, water vapor, and sky.

Spencer Finch: My Business, with the Cloud is Finch's first one-artist exhibition in Washington, D.C.

Spencer Finch: My Business, with the Cloud is made possible through the support of the Women's Committee of the Corcoran, the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation FUNd, and Steven M. Sumberg.

ABOUT SPENCER FINCH

Spencer Finch was born in 1962 and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He studied at the Rhode Island School of Design, Hamilton College, and Doshisha University in Kyoto. Finch had a major exhibition, *What Time is it on the Sun?*, at the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art in 2007. His recent exhibition, *As if the Sea Should Part and Show a Further Sea*, was exhibited at the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane, Australia in 2009. Finch was also included in the *Making Worlds* exhibition at the 2009 Venice Biennale, the 2004 Whitney Biennial, and has created several works of public art, including the recent project for the High Line in New York with Creative Time. His work is held in many museum collections, including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; High Museum of Art, Atlanta; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; and the Guggenheim Museum, New York.

PRESS PREVIEW

Media are invited to a press preview for *Spencer Finch: My Business, with the Cloud* on **Wednesday, September 8 at 10 a.m.** at the Corcoran, 500 Seventeenth St. N.W., Washington, DC. RSVP to pr@corcoran.org by September 6.

*****The artist will be present and available for interviews at the press preview. A gallery talk will follow remarks at 10:30 a.m.*****

EXHIBITION PROGRAMMING

An extensive series of cultural and educational programs inspired by *Spencer Finch: My Business, with the Cloud* will begin in September.

In response to Finch's cloud sculpture in the Rotunda, acclaimed choreographer Dana Tai Soon Burgess will create a site-specific dance piece for his celebrated Washington, D.C.-based dance company DTSB&Co. Performances of his unique dance, entitled "Streamlit Vapors are Borne" will occur multiple times in the Rotunda on Sundays, December 5 and 12, at 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m., and 2:30 p.m., complimentary with Gallery admission, pre-registration encouraged.

Burgess has chosen Stephen Foster songs combined with contemporary sound montages to accompany the new dance for 7 dancers. Dana Tai Soon Burgess will speak about the process of designing the piece and the inspiration behind "Streamlit Vapors are Borne" as part of a post-performance program in the Corcoran's Frances and Armand Hammer Auditorium. Dana Tai Soon Burgess is the director of Washington DC's premiere contemporary dance company, DTSB&CO. He was raised in Santa Fe, New Mexico by parents who are both visual artists. The *Washington Post* says, "Burgess's work is food for the eye, spare, intimate and perfect as a pearl."

For more information about exhibition-related public programs and events, visit www.corcoran.org. (See *NOW at the Corcoran* Public Programs Press Release.)

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Corcoran's hours of operation are as follows: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Thursday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; closed Monday and Tuesday. Admission to the Corcoran is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors (62+) and students (with valid ID), children 12 and under, military (with valid ID) and Members enter for free.

MEMBERSHIP

Corcoran Membership offers free year-round admission, special access to the Corcoran's renowned permanent collection, traveling exhibitions, and discounts at the Shop and Café as well as free or reduced admission to lectures, films, and concerts. Membership supports exceptional art exhibitions, educational programs and significant outreach efforts to underserved youth in the local community.

Member Preview Day for *Spencer Finch: My Business, with the Cloud* is **Saturday, September 25 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.** For more information, visit www.corcoran.org/membership.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

NOW at the Corcoran will continue with an exhibition by Chris Martin, on view June to October 2011, and Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro, from December 2011 to March 2012. (See *NOW at the Corcoran* Upcoming Exhibitions Press Release.)

ABOUT THE CORCORAN

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, a privately funded institution, was founded in 1869 as Washington's first and largest nonfederal museum of art. It is known internationally for its distinguished collection of historical and modern American art as well as contemporary art, photography, European painting, sculpture and the decorative arts. Founded in 1890, the Corcoran College of Art + Design is Washington's only four-year college of art and design offering BFA degrees in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design and Photography; a five-year Bachelor of Fine Arts/ Master of Arts in Teaching (BFA/MAT); and a two-year Master of Arts (MA) in Interior Design or History of Decorative Arts. The College's Continuing Education program offers part-time credit and non-credit classes for children and adults and draws more than 2,500 participants each year.

For more information about the Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art + Design, visit www.corcoran.org.

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Photo credit:

Page two: Spencer Finch, *Taxonomy of Clouds*, (detail), 2006. One of seventeen digital inkjet prints, 6 x 6 in. each. Courtesy of Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago.