

University Galleries of Illinois State University is pleased to present *Alison Ruttan: Unmaking of Places and Histories* from October 25 through December 15, 2019.

- Thursday, October 24 at 12pm: Artist lecture
- Friday, October 25, from 5 to 7pm: Artist reception
- Saturday, November 9 at 1pm: Exhibition tour and workshop co-presented with the Children's Discovery Museum
- Thursday, November 14 at 9am: Stroller tour
- Field trip program, curator-led tours, and workshops available by appointment throughout the exhibition.

Unmaking of Places and Histories features new and recent architectural ceramic sculptures by Chicago-based artist Alison Ruttan. She draws on the histories of art, architecture, and warfare to address the aftermath of conflicts in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq, as a way of, in her words, "bearing witness from here." One gallery is dedicated to the artist's *Dark City*, a tabletop row of nine white ceramic buildings referencing the widespread destruction in Syria. The row of forms begins with a solid building, seemingly intact, but the other eight progressively crumble and flatten. Ruttan cites the influence of artists Donald Judd and Sol LeWitt in terms of remaking similar geometric forms, but in her work, various states of collapse and devastation are evident within the Modern grid. The artist sees the small scale of her works as a "purposely intimate anti-war monument."

The exhibition also premieres several new works for which Ruttan embedded her ceramic buildings and debris within found furniture. The blue-glazed ruins of a building reach upward from a narrow wooden dresser; a pile of pale gray rubble overflows the open drawer of a white nightstand; the remains of a black building freeze in a state of collapse into dark nesting tables. Where the tabletop sculptures of city blocks address the macro view, these works help make visible the impact of destruction on individual domestic environments.

Alison Ruttan: Unmaking of Places and Histories is organized by University Galleries' Director and Chief Curator Kendra Paitz. The exhibition and programming are supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency. Field trip support is provided by a grant from the Town of Normal Harmon Arts Grant Program.

Alison Ruttan's work has been exhibited at Chicago Cultural Center; Frist Art Museum, Nashville; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas; California Museum of Photography at University of California, Riverside; Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago; Rocket Gallery, London; Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago; Directors Lounge, Berlin; and Sullivan Galleries at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work is included in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College, Chicago; University of California, Riverside; and Minneapolis Institute of Art, among others. Ruttan's work has been reviewed in *Art in America*, *Chicago Tribune*, *ART/LTD*, *WBEZ-Chicago*, *Newcity Art*, and *Artslant*, among others. She has received awards from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, Jerome Foundation, and the Wexner Museum, among others. Ruttan is Associate Professor of Contemporary Practices at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

All events are free and open to the public.

Events

- Thursday, October 24 at 12pm: Artist lecture
- Friday, October 25, from 5 to 7pm: Artist reception
- Saturday, November 9 at 1pm: Exhibition tour and workshop co-presented with the Children's Discovery Museum. Participants (ages 7-10) will meet at the CDM, come to University Galleries for an exhibition tour, and return to the CDM for an exhibition-related artmaking activity. Registration is required for this free program at childrensdiscoverymuseum.net. This program is made possible by an Illinois Prairie Community Foundation—Mirza Arts and Culture grant awarded to the CDM.
- Thursday, November 14 at 9am: Stroller tour
- Field trip program, curator-led tours, and workshops available by appointment throughout the exhibition. Please contact University Galleries at gallery@ilstu.edu or 309.438.5487 to schedule an appointment. Stipends are available for K-12 schools or community organizations to offset the costs of transportation.

University Galleries, a unit in the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts, is located at Uptown Station at the corner of Beaufort and Broadway streets. Parking is available directly above in the Uptown Station parking deck, and the first hour is free, as well as any time after 5:01pm. If you need special accommodations to participate in any event, please contact University Galleries at 309.438.5487 or gallery@IllinoisState.edu. All events at University Galleries are free and open to the public.

For more information, visit Galleries.IllinoisState.edu or call 309.438.5487. Find us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Sign up to receive emails by clicking the Newsletter link on our website.