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ARTIST TALK | OUR HAUS

MATHIAS KESSLER IN CONVERSATION WITH AMANDA MCDONALD CROWLEY

FRIDAY AUG 17, 05:30 PM - 06:30 PM

For this special event, which takes place in conjunction with the Austrian Cultural Forum's ongoing exhibition, **Our Haus**, we look forward to hosting **curator Amanda McDonald Crowley** and participating artist **Mathias Kessler**.

Mathias Kessler's work often deals with strategies of the perception of nature in 19th century German Romanticism. For the installation at the Austrian Cultural Forum, the artist built a model inspired by the painting *Das Eismeer. Die gescheiterte Hoffnung* by Caspar David Friedrich. The landscape-shaped 3D replica is placed in the freezer compartment of a refrigerator unit which is also stocked with beer. Exhibition visitors are encouraged to help themselves to a beverage, which results in a constant opening and closing of the refrigerator door. This process slowly leads to the 3D model being covered with a layer of ice, in what is commonly referred to as "freezer burn", transforming it into the *Eismeer* (Arctic Sea) of Friedrich's painting. Kessler's piece provides a humorous and melancholic comment on the global problem of deglaciating polar ice caps.

Our Haus celebrates 10 years of the Austrian Cultural Forum New York. To celebrate cultural exchange we are committed to discussion and social engagement. As much as Mathias Kessler's installation, *Das Eismeer - Die gescheiterte Hoffnung*, is a formal sculpture and a comment on the sublime, it is also a social sculpture.

Join Mathias Kessler, and **Our Haus**-curator Amanda McDonald Crowley for a conversation, over beer, about the exhibition. Amanda and Mathias are keen to discuss ideas of location and dislocation in urban environments, architecture, food, and sharing. But they are equally interested to have you steer the conversation.



Mathias KESSLER, *Das Eismeer - Die gescheiterte Hoffnung* (2012), Installation view. Photo by David Plakke

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

The work of New York-based Austrian artist **Mathias Kessler** touches on human interventions into nature, and plays with our longing for nature which is seemingly untouched. He exposes these interventions with much subtlety, and in doing so cultivates, creates, and reconstructs nature while pointing out that nature is just another fiction of the 19th and 20th centuries (- Robert Smithson). Kessler, who was born in Germany, also investigates the complex relationship between man and nature with regard to tensions between "natura naturans, self-creating nature and natura naturata, created nature."

Amanda McDonald Crowley is a New York-based Australian curator and facilitator who has created programs and events of new media art, contemporary art, and trans-disciplinary work. She was the Executive Director of Eyebeam Art and Technology Center from late 2005 to 2011. She has curated exhibitions, screenings and events which have been presented in New York, Australia, Canada, the UK, New Zealand, and Korea.

VENUE
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Free admission, no reservations necessary.

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