

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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High-resolution images available upon request.

EMMETT RAMSTAD: *AFTER YOU*

FEBRUARY 26 – APRIL 24, 2016



Emmett Ramstad. *Stall*, 2016, detail. Courtesy of the artist.

OPENING RECEPTION: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 6 – 8 PM

ARTIST TALK WITH EMMETT RAMSTAD AND CURATOR SUSANNAH MAGERS, 7 PM

Opening receptions are free and open to the public. RSVP is requested to jseresse@rochesterartcenter.org

After You is the first exhibition in Rochester Art Center's 2016 3rd Floor Emerging Artist Series, featuring new sculpture and installation-based work by Emmett Ramstad, a Minneapolis-based artist. The sculptures in the exhibition originate from familiar bathroom features such as towel dispensers, soap dishes, bathroom stalls, and restroom insignia. Together they form extra-ordinary pieces that distort the scale and function of bathroom surroundings and ask the viewer to reconsider their public grooming associations, as well as constructions of cleanliness.

How do we negotiate the simultaneously private and public space of the restroom? Intervening with certain elements typically found in these spaces—placing soap dishes with bars of soap on the opposite side of the installed soap dispensers, or removing signage denoting the space as gendered “male” or “female,” and placing mirrors on the doors—the work addresses access, the politicization and policing of public restrooms, and the notion of false privacy. For gender non-conforming individuals, navigating the seemingly simple activity of using a public restroom is, in the artist's words, one of “always being aware of how you are being perceived, and of negotiating belonging.”

In addition to interventions within the space of the restroom, *After You* includes a 30-foot long soap dish sculpture, featuring the joined soap remnants of many kind donors. The varying levels of use, dirtiness, and shape of the soap bits reveal traces of the individuals who donated them. In *Stall*, 2016, Ramstad recreates a bathroom stall, using reclaimed materials, but adds a welcome mat, wallpaper, and a working telephone. At certain times throughout the exhibition's duration, the artist will call the phone, speaking to whomever might be in the stall at that time. Like *After You*, 2016, this work asks us to reconsider how we all participate in bathroom rituals, and if any of us are ever allowed to truly enjoy privacy in publicly regulated spaces.

Instead of focusing on the ways in which we are divided and separated, Ramstad's work encourages the viewer to imagine how we are connected through the universality of function in the daily behaviors we all enact—from using the restroom to washing our hands. The viewer is asked to contemplate the following questions: Who is regulating privacy and public space? What are the rules that we follow because we think we have to? How do we craft our own sense of belonging in these spaces?



Emmett Ramstad. *After You*, 2016, detail. Courtesy of the artist.

SOAP WANTED!

Ever wonder what to do with those last remnants of soap? Artist Emmett Ramstad is now collecting used bits of bars of soap for a 30 foot-long communal soap dish sculpture. **Please contribute used soap nubs** and be a part of this new work for *After You*. **A collection box will be at the front reception desk through Monday, February 22, 2016.**

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Emmett Ramstad is an artist whose work investigates the intimate ordinary through sculptural representations of bodies and their detritus. Ramstad lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota and has exhibited artworks throughout the United States as well as Amsterdam and Istanbul, including solo exhibitions at Minneapolis Institute of Arts and Rochester Art Center. He is a recipient of a Jerome Foundation Fellowship for Emerging Artists, an Art and Change grant through The Leeway Foundation, and a Professional Development Grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts. He has performed in productions by The BodyCartography Project, made costumes and sets for five touring contemporary dance productions and has curated and organized six gallery shows. His work is in collections at The Weisman Art Museum, MCAD and Second State Press. He is currently a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Art at The University of Minnesota.

After You is curated by Susannah Magers, Curator, Art & Public Engagement.

3rd Floor Emerging

Artist Exhibition Series

ROCHESTER ART CENTER

ABOUT 3RD FLOOR EMERGING ARTIST EXHIBITION SERIES

In 2004, Rochester Art Center initiated the 3rd Floor Emerging Artist Series—an exhibition program dedicated to promising artists working in the state of Minnesota. Since its inception, the series has reflected shifting trends in contemporary artistic practice and production and has helped to facilitate the creation of new bodies of work in a variety of media including photography, installation, sound, painting, drawing, sculpture, and film. Now in our twelfth year, the 3rd Floor Emerging Artist Series continues to support emerging artists and to provide a dedicated forum for the exhibition of new work. To learn more, visit: www.rochesterartcenter.org/about/opportunities/artist-opportunities/

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Celebrating the
creative spirit of
emerging artists



The 3rd Floor Emerging Artist Series is made possible by funding from the Jerome Foundation.

ABOUT ROCHESTER ART CENTER

A leading center for contemporary art, Rochester Art Center is a non-collecting institution located in the heart of Rochester's historic downtown on the Zumbro River. Designed by Hammel, Green and Abrahamson (HGA), the Art Center's simple and clean design works harmoniously with nature – linking the indoors to the outside to create a shimmering complement to the river below. The Art Center shares a connection to Mayo Park with Mayo Civic Center and Rochester Civic Theatre. Founded in 1946, Rochester Art Center presents an ongoing schedule of exhibitions, across a broad spectrum, of new and innovative work by local, regional, national, and international artists; dynamic education programs for all ages; and an active program of community partnerships and visitor engagement initiatives. Rochester Art Center is located at 40 Civic Center Drive SE, Rochester, MN, 55904.

Rochester Art Center is admission free for 2016.

Hours are Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday: 10 am – 5 pm, Thursday: 10 am – 9 pm; Sunday: 12 noon – 5 pm.

For more information, please call 507-282-8629 or visit www.rochesterartcenter.org.