



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Katrín Sigurdardóttir: Metamorphic**

**May 11–September 16, 2017**  
**Opening Reception: Thursday, May 11, 7pm**

This spring, New York-based artist and San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) alumna Katrín Sigurdardóttir (BFA 1990) is SFAI's Harker Award Artist-in-Residence. An exhibition of her work produced during the residency opens at the school's Walter and McBean Galleries May 11, 2017 and is on view through the summer.

In her evocative sculptures and installations, Sigurdardóttir explores the way objects, structures, and spaces define perception. Examining distance and memory, she mines the forms and methods of architecture, archeology, and geology. While alluding to real locations, her work dissolves traditional representation to reach elusive and untethered experiences of place.

Sigurdardóttir frequently addresses themes relating to perception of place and transit. In *Green Grass of Home* (1997), she constructed a hybrid toolbox/suitcase, lined with maquettes of parks in Reykjavík, San Francisco Bay Area, and New York, all cities she has called home. Fifteen years later, she produced a large tiled floor in her New York studio, that was exhibited as Iceland's official contribution in the 2013 Venice Biennial, then traveled to the Reykjavík Museum of Art and finally returned to New York, where it was exhibited at SculptureCenter. A floor is by definition static, yet this floor defied that logic, traveling and changing in each location, as the intersecting architecture at each site was carved from its form.

Between 2005 and 2015, Sigurdardóttir produced a series of sculptures that were subjected to chance transformations, and then reconstructed, bearing witness both to their original form and the quasi-archaeological process that followed. Her sculptures in the upcoming exhibition at SFAI also tell a double story. They are representations of real objects, but simultaneously display a material transformation, as the sculptures journey from their place of origin to this exhibition. These "migratory" works replicate

domestic objects from Sigurdardóttir's personal history, resulting from a process spanning three sites of production: Reykjavík, New York and San Francisco, as well as the transit between. The sculptures are originally cast in a soft material that intentionally erodes as they move towards their destination, and at each point of transit the missing parts are replaced with a harder, more resilient material. Their appearance recalls geological sediments and seismic migration where time and movement can be read through layers, strata, and striations. The title of the show refers to a geological phenomenon, where minerals or geologic texture change within pre-existing rocks.

This process of replacing and renewing the sculptures, one piece at a time, recalls Theseus' ship, and questions the sculptures identity. But it also tells a larger story about place, memory, and the unfolding narrative of human life through time and space.

As Sigurdardóttir's process embraces wreckage and erosion along with careful reconstruction — the works recall the traditional Japanese repair method of *kintsugi* and related aesthetics of *wabi-sabi*, which centers on the appreciation and acceptance of transience and imperfection.

In the Walter and McBean Galleries, Sigurdardóttir's works are placed within a large surface installation, produced in collaboration with current SFAI students, where the participants contribute their own histories in parallel with her sculptural objects. Through this collaboration, Sigurdardóttir seeks to bring in additional narratives of place, allowing for the direct imprint of exhibition visitors, whose presence will augment the surface throughout the duration of the exhibition.

*Metamorphic* is curated by Hesse McGraw, SFAI Vice President for Exhibitions and Public Programs; and organized with Katie Hood Morgan, SFAI Assistant Curator and Exhibitions Manager.

**The Harker Award for Interdisciplinary Studies** supports artists-in-residence at SFAI. The Harker Award was established through a generous bequest by artist and SFAI faculty member Ann Chamberlain and is administered by the San Francisco Foundation. Alejandro Almanza Pereda served as the 2015-16 resident; and Michael Jones McKean will be the 2017-18 resident.

#### **About the artist**

Katrin Sigurdardóttir was born in Reykjavík, Iceland. Her works have been shown extensively in Europe, North America, and South America, and are included in numerous public and private collections. In 2013, she represented Iceland in the 55th Venice Biennial. Notable solo exhibition venues include The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; MoMA PS1, New York; Parasol Unit Foundation for Contemporary Art, London; MIT List Visual Art Center, Boston; and FRAC Bourgogne, Dijon, France. In

2014, her large-scale work for the Venice Biennale traveled to Reykjavík Art Museum, Iceland, and SculptureCenter, New York.

### **Acknowledgements**

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### **About Walter and McBean Galleries**

SFAI's Exhibitions and Public Programs provide direct access to artists and ideas that advance our culture. The Walter and McBean Galleries, established in 1969, present exhibitions at the forefront of contemporary art practice. The galleries serve as a laboratory for innovative and adventurous projects and commission new work from emerging and established artists.

### **About San Francisco Art Institute**

Founded in 1871, SFAI is one of the country's oldest and most prestigious institutions of higher education in the practice and study of contemporary art. As a diverse community of working artists and scholars, SFAI provides students with a rigorous education in the arts and preparation for a life in the arts through an immersive studio environment, an integrated liberal arts and art history curriculum, and critical engagement with the world. Committed to educating artists who will shape the future of art, culture, and society, SFAI fosters creativity and original thinking in an open, experimental, and interdisciplinary context.

### **General Information**

SFAI's Walter and McBean Galleries are open to the public Tuesday 11 AM – 7 PM and Wednesday – Saturday, 11 AM – 6 PM and are free to the public. For general information, the public may visit [sfai.edu](http://sfai.edu) or call (415) 749-4563. SFAI is located at 800 Chestnut St., San Francisco, CA.

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