

PHOTO, MEDIA AND DIGITAL ART

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For Immediate Release (January 18, 2016)



SUSANNE KRIEMANN MINES AN ENTANGLED HISTORY IN NEW EXHIBITION AT PREFIX

(Toronto) – Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art is pleased to present *Pechblende (prologue)*, a solo exhibition featuring a new body of work by German artist **Susanne Kriemann**, curated by Jayne Wilkinson. Bringing together an assemblage of archival materials, photo documents, literature and found objects, the exhibition investigates concepts of scale, proximity and distance in relation to radioactivity and the body.

The **opening reception**, beginning with an **artist's talk at 7 PM** and a **reception to follow from 7:30 to 10 PM**, will be held on **Thursday, February 4** at Prefix, located at 401 Richmond Street West, Suite 124, Toronto. The artist and curator will be present. The exhibition continues until **March 26, 2016**. The gallery is open to the public from Wednesday to Saturday, 12 to 5 PM, and by appointment. Admission is free.

Centred on the mineral *pechblende* (the German word for a type of uraninite), Kriemann's project traces a history of scientific and photographic processes narrated through the interconnected sites of laboratory, archive, museum and mine. Highly radioactive and uranium rich, *pechblende* was relentlessly mined in the Ore Mountains of the former German Democratic Republic between 1946 and 1989, ultimately facilitating nuclear armament in the USSR. Despite the toxicity of the mines, and the documented health threats to the miners who worked there, the landscape of the Ore Mountains has now been transformed into a tranquil mountain vista, with few recognizable traces of the still-radiating industrial worksites.

Concerned with both the literal and the political invisibility of radioactivity, Kriemann worked with scientists at the American Museum of Natural History (New York), the National Archives (Washington) and the Museum of Natural History (Berlin) to produce various versions of an "autoradiograph"—a unique type of photograph that is the result of directly exposing light-sensitive paper to radioactive specimens, such as *pechblende*. This cameraless exposure results in an indexical but highly abstract image, one that is haunted by impressions of the iconic nuclear mushroom cloud and its blinding light. Reading the exhibition elements together, one might consider this assemblage a nuclear prologue, one that offers a way to read *pechblende*, and its constellations of emanating rays, as an archive of the future.

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This is the first of two related exhibitions, with the second exhibition, **Susanne Kriemann: Pechblende**, to be presented at the Schering Stiftung (Berlin) from March 18 to June 5, 2016. An opening reception will be held Thursday, March 17 from 7 to 9 PM. For more details, please visit www.scheringstiftung.de.

About the Artist

Susanne Kriemann, born in Erlangen, Germany in 1972, is an artist living and working in Berlin. She studied under Joseph Kosuth and Joan Jonas at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Stuttgart) and later attended the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts (Paris). In her expansive projects, she often combines her own images with collected and found photographs in order to investigate issues of historiography, archival knowledge, and the connections between art, literature and archaeology. Her work has been exhibited in solo exhibitions across Europe, including at the Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, Kunsthalle Winterthur, Arnolfini Center for Contemporary Arts (Bristol) and 21er Haus (Vienna). In addition to her installations, she has published numerous artist books, including *Ray*, *A Silent Crazy Jungle Under Glass* and *Het Licht/The Light*. Recently a visiting scholar at Parsons The New School of Design (New York), she is a long-term artist advisor and researcher at the Jan Van Eyck Academie (Maastricht, The Netherlands) and is represented by Galerie Wilfried Lentz (Rotterdam) and Galerie Raebervon Stenglin (Zürich).

About the Curator

Jayne Wilkinson is a Toronto-based writer, curator and emerging scholar. She holds an MA in Art History and Critical Theory from the University of British Columbia (Vancouver), and her research interests focus on the intersection of aesthetics, politics and visibility in contemporary photographic practices. She is currently director/curator of Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art and editor/publisher of *Prefix Photo* magazine.

About Prefix

Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art is a public art gallery and arts publishing house based in Toronto. A registered charitable organization, Prefix fosters the appreciation and understanding of contemporary photographic, media and digital arts through exhibitions, publications, public programmes and related activities.

Acknowledgements

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Image: Susanne Kriemann, *Pechblende (prologue)*, 2015. Left: View into former uranium mine, Ore Mountains, Germany. Right: View into photo laboratory, American Museum of Natural History (New York).

For more information, print-ready images or to schedule an interview with the artist or curator, please contact:

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