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ALEXIS ROCKMAN: SHIPWRECKS
**Renowned American Painter Examines Human Impact on the Planet
Through Time-Honored Maritime Genre**
JUNE 12 – JULY 26, 2021

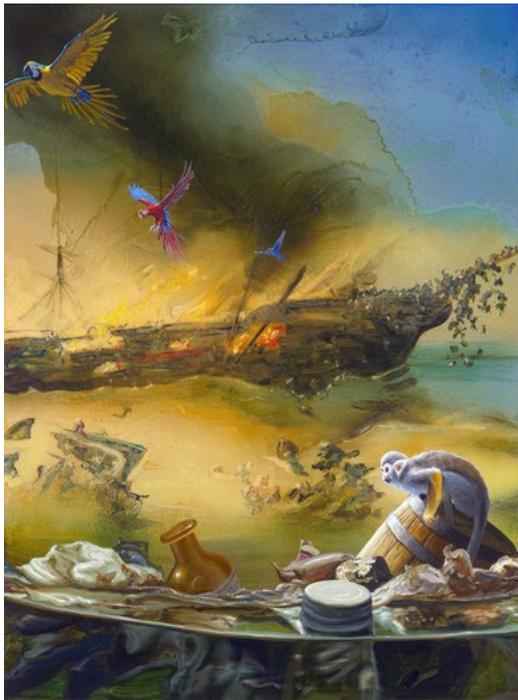


Alexis Rockman, *Maelstrom*, 2019, oil on wood. Courtesy of the artist and Sperone Westwater Gallery.

June 4, 2021—East Hampton, NY — The exhibition ***Alexis Rockman: Shipwrecks*** will open at Guild Hall, 158 Main Street, East Hampton, on **Saturday, June 12. Curated by Executive Director Andrea Grover**, the exhibition includes large-scale, fantastical paintings and watercolors that tackle pressing ecological issues, and updates and transforms the tradition of maritime painting to create powerful meditations on migration, climate change, and globalization. **The exhibition will be on view at Guild Hall from June 12 through July 26, 2021.**

“Through the lens of the shipwreck, Alexis Rockman examines the complexity of the human psyche, the rearrangement of material culture and economies, and the exploitation of life, with its intended and unintended consequences. His paintings awaken imagination to the colossal impact of the Anthropocene, and with any luck inspire better stewardship of the planet,” states Andrea Grover.

The genesis of this exhibition can be traced to September 2018 when Grover moderated a conversation with Rockman at the Amagansett Free Library. Having recently curated *Radical Seafaring* at the Parrish Art Museum, Grover was intrigued when Rockman shared that he was working on a series of shipwreck paintings. From there, the exhibition concept was born and the artist has since created nearly 50 extraordinary new works to be exhibited at Guild Hall. The exhibition premiered at partner institution Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA in their East India Marine Hall in March 2021.



Alexis Rockman, *The Sinking of the Brig Helen*, 2017, oil on dibond. Courtesy of David Roth and Heifara Rutgers, New York.

Rockman draws upon imagery from historical paintings and reimagines the scenes with compelling compositions that highlight ecological impact. His 2017 painting, *The Sinking of the Brig Helen*, vividly revives a 19th-century tragedy. After British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace dedicated four years to biological research in the Amazon rainforest, his ship, the brig *Helen*, caught fire in the middle of the Atlantic on its return to London. While the crew gathered essentials onto lifeboats, flames engulfed Wallace's extensive animal and plant collections, detailed notes, and scientific drawings. The fire consumed thousands of his specimens—butterflies, moths, beetles, ants, and anteater and manatee skeletons—and several living monkeys, parrots, macaws, and other birds perished. This painting, among others in the exhibition highlights the insatiable human appetite for governing the natural world.

The exhibition is accompanied by the catalogue *Alexis Rockman: Shipwrecks* (DelMonico Books, 2021), edited by Andrea Grover, with an introduction by Daniel Finamore and Trevor Smith, and contributions by Sasha Archibald, Chanda Laine Carey, and Brett Littman. The catalogue is available for \$40 at shop.guildhall.org or by in person at Guild Hall.

About the Artist

Alexis Rockman (born 1962) has depicted an uneasy vision of the collision between civilization and nature — often apocalyptic scenarios on a monumental scale — for over three decades. Notable solo museum exhibitions include *Alexis Rockman: Manifest Destiny at the Brooklyn Museum* (2004), which traveled to several institutions including the Wexner Center for the Arts (2004) and the Rhode Island School of Design (2005). In 2010, the Smithsonian American Art Museum organized *Alexis Rockman: A Fable for Tomorrow*, a major touring survey of his paintings and works on paper. Concurrent with Rockman's 2013 exhibition at Sperone Westwater, the Drawing Center mounted *Drawings from Life of Pi*, featuring the artist's collaboration with Ang Lee on the award-winning film *Life of Pi*. His series of 76 *New Mexico Field Drawings* was included in *Future Shock* at SITE Santa Fe (2017-18). *Alexis Rockman: The Great Lakes Cycle*, a major touring exhibition of large-scale paintings and watercolors, as well as field drawings, of the Great Lakes was organized by the Grand Rapids Art Museum and opened in January of 2018 and toured to the Haggerty Museum of Art at Marquette University; Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland; The Chicago Cultural Center; The Weisman Art

Museum; and the Flint Institute of Arts. Rockman's work is represented in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art; Brooklyn Museum; Grand Rapids Art Museum; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; New Orleans Museum of Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Smithsonian American Art Museum; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; and Whitney Museum of American Art.

GALLERY HOURS: THURSDAY TO MONDAY, 12-5PM, SATURDAY, 12-8PM

Exhibition-Related Programs

SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 7PM

Art and Cinema: A Conversation with Alexis Rockman and Carter Burwell

Moderated by Andrea Grover

[MORE INFO](#)

SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 8:30PM

Outdoor Screening of Ang Lee's *LIFE OF PI*

Introduced by Alexis Rockman

[MORE INFO](#)

SATURDAYS, JUNE 19 & 26 AND JULY 3 & 10, 12-1:30PM

Exhibition-Inspired Saturday Family Workshops

[MORE INFO](#)

THURSDAY, JULY 15, 6-8:30PM

Guild Hall After Hours

[MORE INFO](#)

THURSDAY, JULY 15, 8:30PM

Alexis's Choice:

Outdoor Screening of *20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA*

[MORE INFO](#)

SATURDAY, JULY 17, 3PM

Gallery Tour with Alexis Rockman and Andrea Grover

[MORE INFO](#)

Exhibition Credits

Alexis Rockman: Shipwrecks is made possible by Lead Sponsor Angela Westwater, Sperone Westwater. Co-Lead Sponsors include the Robert Lehman Foundation, Fiona and Eric Rudin, and The James Dicke Family. Additional support has been provided by Philip Aarons and Shelley Fox Aarons, James E. Cottrell and Joseph F. Lovett, and Hall Art Foundation.

Guild Hall's museum programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, an anonymous donor, Peggy J. Amster, Crozier Fine Arts, and

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Free gallery admission is generously funded by Dime Community Bank and Landscape Details.



ABOUT GUILD HALL

Guild Hall, one of the first multidisciplinary centers in the country to combine a museum, theater, and education space under one roof, was established in 1931 as a gathering place for community where an appreciation for the arts would serve to encourage greater civic participation. For nine decades, Guild Hall has embraced this open-minded vision and provided a welcoming environment for the public to engage with art exhibitions, performances, and educational offerings. Art and artists have long been the engine of Guild Hall's activities and the institution continues to find innovative ways to support creativity in everyone.

For more information about this and other programs, visit guildhall.org.

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