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For Immediate Release

PUBLIC PROCESS COMMISSION: MIKA TAJIMA

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A NEW PUBLIC ART PROJECT COMMISSIONED THROUGH SCULPTURECENTER'S NEW CIVIC ART INITIATIVE

Exhibition:
Public Process Commission: Mika Tajima

Long Island City, NY – SculptureCenter is pleased to announce *Meridian* (working title), a temporary public art project by **Mika Tajima**, commissioned through SculptureCenter's new art education program Public Process.

Dates:
Summer 2016

For this public artwork, Tajima will create a vaporous disappearing sculpture—a void that also functions as seating and meeting zone—filled with mercurial color vapor, which dissipates in a matter of minutes. Specifically the sculpture will reference the sunken hot tub spa, which is both a social site and machine for bodily rejuvenation. The technology underlying the hot tub has its roots in aviation and medical therapy before evolving to address relaxing the body after work.

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The colors of the vapor will correspond to real-time global sentiment for gold commodity, a peculiar material that derives its value from the social perception of its qualities and the collective “mood” toward geopolitical and economic events. These vapors will bathe the viewer in these complex sentiments embodied in gold, as a material with such fluid and dematerialized exchangeability. Reflecting on the materiality of contemporary life, this object is a ghost or mirage of a familiar object—a fleeting visual trace of a material form as it fades into abstraction—into thin air.

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Public Process is an intensive program for high school students that uses New York City's rich public art landscape to explore the history and impact of public art and its community influence. In July 2015, eight high school students participated in a two-week course providing interactions and presentations by seasoned professional curators, architects, local historians, and public art organization representatives, and opportunities to visit public art sites. Three artists were invited to make proposals for a public artwork in Long Island City and presented them to the students in their studios. On the last day of the course, the students made presentations and debated the proposals, ultimately selecting Tajima's project for the commission.

Mika Tajima's (born 1975, Los Angeles, California, USA; lives and works in Brooklyn, NY) work explores the way that the built environment shapes the body and our activities. She earned a BA from Bryn Mawr College (1997), an MFA from Columbia University (2003), and attended The Fabric Workshop and Museum Apprentice Training Program (2003). Her extensive exhibition history of solo and group shows includes many prominent national and international venues, including 11R, New York, NY; Taro Nasu,

Tokyo, Japan; Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA; The Kitchen, NY; Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Miami; and Bass Museum, Miami; among others. Her collaborative work has been featured at the Centre Pompidou, Paris; South London Gallery, London; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; and in the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Tajima has been profiled since 2011 on *New York Close Up*, an *Art21* documentary film series dedicated to emerging artists who live and work in New York City. Tajima is also part of the music-based performance group *New Humans*.

The project is curated by SculptureCenter Executive Director and Chief Curator, **Mary Ceruti**.

The Public Process program is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

About SculptureCenter

Founded by artists in 1928, SculptureCenter is a not-for-profit arts institution in Long Island City, NY dedicated to experimental and innovative developments in contemporary sculpture. SculptureCenter commissions new works and presents exhibitions by emerging and established, national and international artists. Our programs identify new talent, explore the conceptual, aesthetic and material concerns of contemporary sculpture, and encourage independent vision.

SculptureCenter's major exhibition and operating support is generously provided by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; Jeanne Donovan Fisher; the Kraus Family Foundation; the Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation; The Pollock-Krasner Foundation; the A. Woodner Fund; and contributions from our Board of Trustees. Additional funding is provided by the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation and contributions from many generous individuals.

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