

Mark de Jong: Swing House

April 20 through September 03, 2018

Curated by Steven Matijcio; Organized by the Contemporary Arts Center

ARTIST(S) Mark de Jong

The character of Cincinnati's architectural and artistic complexion was forever changed by the groundbreaking work of Dutch-born, Cincinnati-based artist Mark deJong (b.1966). His launch of Swing House in the late summer of 2017 welcomes adventurous renters into a three-story structure where all floors and walls have been removed to allow the flight of a swing from the front of the house to the back. In concert with previous projects such as Circle House in Camp Washington and Square House in Northside, deJong turns renovation, restoration and residential revitalization into a transformative art.

After initially training as an artist, deJong spent multiple years in house construction before returning to the art world with a hybrid practice that fuses sculpture, installation, performance and community participation. With this exhibition the CAC celebrates his most ambitious venture to date by showcasing the reconstructed three-flight staircase from Swing House as a surreal archaeological artifact. deJong's other sculptural pieces, which he crafted from the materials salvaged from this and other recent renovations, turn proud but aging surplus into the fodder for elegant, minimalist objects that surround the house and seemingly float in space. In so doing, deJong joins the lineage of artists like Gordon Matta-Clark, Georges Rousse and Theaster Gates in the illuminating re-visioning of built space into poetic and performative interventions. This show will also involve video pieces inspired from the building and navigation of Swing House along with a series of artist-led site tours.