



LONGER THAN THE SKY: ART OF THE OBAMA YEARS



Pope.L, *Gray People Gas Flick*, 2014. Oil and acrylic on paper, 10 1/2 x 9 1/8 inches. Private Collection. © the Estate of Pope.L

July 10–October 11, 2026

Logan Center Exhibitions

The Reva & David Logan
Center for the Arts
at the University of Chicago
915 E 60th St
Chicago, IL
60637

Opening Reception

Saturday, July 11
2 - 4 PM

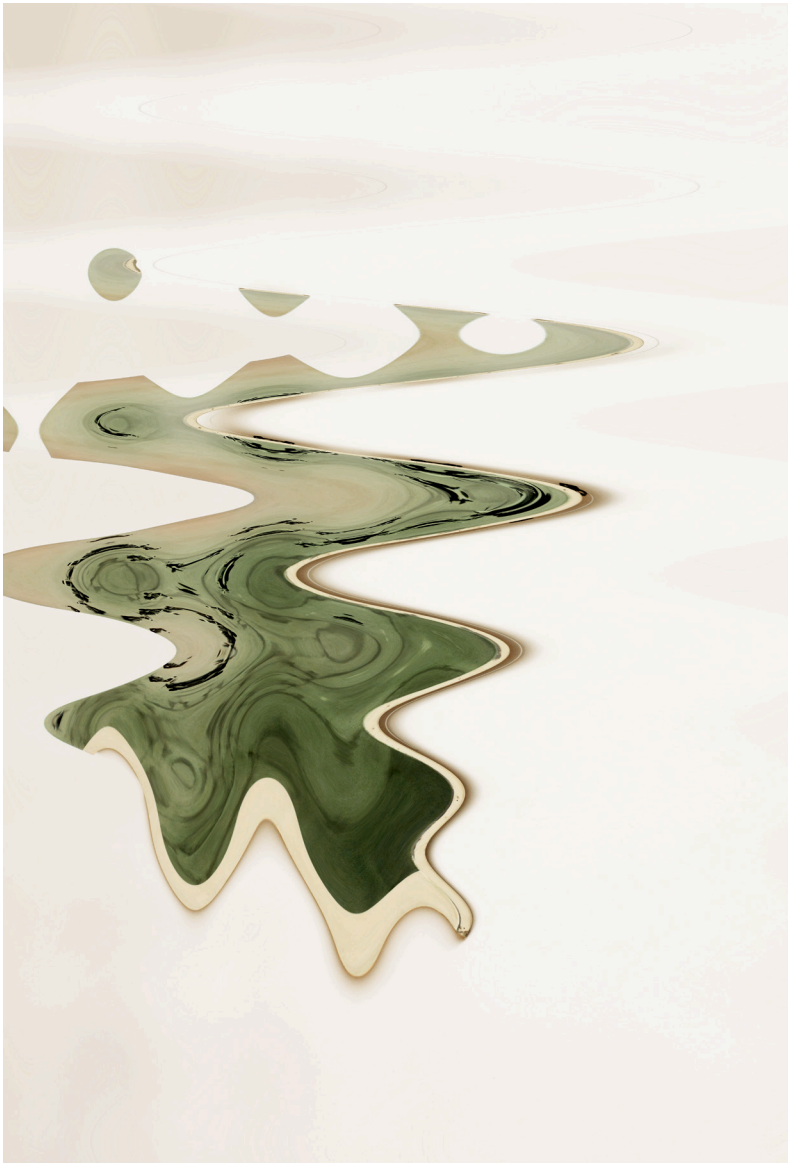
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(CHICAGO - MAY 28, 2026) Logan Center Exhibitions is pleased to announce its Summer 2026 exhibition, *Longer Than the Sky: Art of the Obama Years*, on view from July 10–October 11, 2026 and organized on the occasion of the opening of the Obama Presidential Center. The exhibition presents a constellation of around thirty works by an intergenerational group of artists, amounting to a significant sliver of art produced during the Obama Presidency. *Longer Than the Sky* charts a provisional art history of the recent past, featuring works by **Kevin Beasley, Andrea Fraser, Rachel Harrison, Jacqueline Humphries, Josh Kline, Louise Lawler, Jason Lazarus, Ralph Lemon, Glenn Ligon, Kerry James Marshall, Catherine Opie, Adrian Piper, Pope.L, Seth Price, Aliza Nisenbaum, Cameron Rowland, Allan Sekula, Cauleen Smith, Hito Steyerl, Diamond Stingily, Martine Syms, Danh Vo, Jack Whitten, and Amanda Williams** among other artists.

The exhibition's title, *Longer Than the Sky*, comes from James Baldwin's 1957 short story, "Sonny's Blues," and evokes the intermingling of optimism and despair that defined the period between 2008 and 2016. The story concludes when the younger of



Louise Lawler, *No Drones (adjusted to fit, distorted for the times)*, 2010/2011/2022 [as adjusted for the exhibition *Longer Than the Sky: Art of the Obama Years*, 2026]. Adhesive wall material, dimensions variable to match proportions of a given wall at any scale determined by exhibitor. Courtesy the artist and Sprüth Magers.

two brothers performs a stirring rendition of the blues, an event that carries the fleeting glimmer of hopefulness, even freedom. “I was yet aware that this was only a moment,” the narrator subsequently reflects, “that the world waited outside, as hungry as a tiger, and that trouble stretched above us, longer than the sky.”

Longer Than the Sky centers on artistic practices that gained relevance for the ways they engaged self-reflexively with their historical moment. These artworks have been assembled not for their stylistic similarities, but rather, for the ways they offer distinct perspectives on the circumstances in which they were made. While some address specific political events, the majority evoke their political context more obliquely, highlighting an overlapping set of social, technological, and aesthetic concerns that shaped the art of this era. Though the exhibition includes several artists who launched their careers in these years, it also foregrounds many who made period-defining work long before 2008. The prominence of the latter points to the ways these years were marked as much by continuity as they were by change and rupture.

Opened in 2012 at the height of the Obama years, the Reva & David Logan Center for the Arts is part of this history. Its architects, Billie Tsien and Tod Williams, would go on to design

the Obama Presidential Center down the street. Through its exhibitions and programs, the Logan Center has played a key role in supporting artistic communities on the South Side of Chicago. In keeping with this context, *Longer Than the Sky* situates the work of several Chicago-based artists within broader conversations about global contemporary art.

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Longer Than the Sky: Art of the Obama Years is presented by Logan Center Exhibitions and curated by **Jenny Harris**, doctoral candidate in Art History at the University of Chicago, who partnered with the Logan Center in 2024 to co-curate the exhibition *Jessica Stockholder: For Events*. The Logan Center is pleased to partner with the Obama Presidential Center on related programs that will take place during the exhibition. Exhibition related programs will be developed in partnership with **Dorian Sylvain**, an artist and curator who has frequently partnered with the Logan Center and was commissioned by The Obama Foundation to develop a collaborative site-specific mural at the Obama Presidential Center’s Home Court. Exhibition and programming support has been provided by the Ng Family Visiting Artist Fund, the Revada Foundation, and Friends of the Logan Center.

Please check the Logan Center Exhibitions website for updates on related programming:
loganexhibitions.uchicago.edu
or follow Logan Center Exhibitions on Facebook and Instagram
[@logancenterexhibitions](https://www.facebook.com/LoganCenterExhibitions)

ABOUT JENNY HARRIS

Jenny Harris is a doctoral candidate and Neubauer Family Distinguished Fellow in Art History at the University of Chicago. Her research explores modern and contemporary art with specializations in the relationships between abstraction and ornament, dance and performance, and craft and design. Her dissertation analyzes the influence of dance and choreography on American visual artists and institutions between 1930 and 1960 and has been supported by fellowships from the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, the Georges Lurcy Charitable and Educational Trust, the France Chicago Center at the University of Chicago, and the Center for Ballet and the Arts. Prior to doctoral study, Jenny worked in The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Painting and Sculpture where she contributed to the inaugural reinstallation of the museum's collection in 2019 and the exhibition *Robert Rauschenberg: Among Friends* (2017), and co-organized *The Shape of Shape, Artist's Choice: Amy Sillman* (2019). She has since held curatorial fellowships in the Art Institute of Chicago's Department of Modern and Contemporary Art and at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Jenny's art historical research has resulted in publications in *The New York Times*, the *Journal of Surrealism and the Americas*, and several exhibition catalogues. Critical writing has appeared in *Artforum* and the *Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, among other publications. Jenny holds a B.A. in Art History from Wellesley College.

ABOUT LOGAN CENTER EXHIBITIONS

Logan Center Exhibitions presents international contemporary art programming at the Logan Center Gallery and throughout the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts at the University of Chicago. Reflecting the spirit of inquiry at the university, Logan Center Exhibitions focuses on open, collaborative, and process-based approaches to cultural production. Working closely with artists, students, scholars, and community members, Logan Center Exhibitions presents innovative exhibitions by emerging and established artists; supports ambitious new commissions and research projects; disseminates knowledge through publications; and facilitates connections through talks and other public programs.



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General Information

Logan Center Exhibitions is located at:
The Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts,
University of Chicago
915 E 60th Street
Chicago, IL 60637

Gallery Hours

Wed-Fri, noon-8pm
Sat-Sun, noon-4pm

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