

# John Michael Kohler Arts Center



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Patricia Piccinini: encounters of another plot, installation view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, 2023. Photo: Drome Studio, courtesy of the artist and Hosfelt Gallery.

## Envisioning the Unknown with Patricia Piccinini

John Michael Kohler Arts Center presents *encounters of another plot* through Oct. 29

As a storyteller, multidisciplinary artist Patricia Piccinini hints at the possibilities of new Earth-dwelling species, modes of resilience, and evolutionary potentials in response to our changing Earth/home.

With *encounters of another plot*—on view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wis., through October 29—Piccinini continues her narrative inquiry into people’s relationships with the world and the shifting border between artificial and natural.

Working primarily in a hyperrealist tradition of sculpture, Piccinini gathers information from scientific research and current events to envision genetically and physically adapted creatures. These new beings are akin to Earth creatures but armed with reconfigured bodies and new survival mechanisms.

The exhibition features a life-size diorama sheltering Piccinini’s sculptures, which was collaboratively constructed using recycled materials. The diorama is accompanied by a film following the journey of a human animal and a fictional Earth being walking through Australian landscapes.

According to Piccinini, her artistic practice “is focused on bodies and relationships: the relationships between people and other creatures, between people and our bodies, between creatures and the environment, between the artificial and the natural. I am particularly interested in the way that the everyday realities of the world around us change these relations.”



Patricia Piccinini: encounters of another plot installation, view at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. Patricia Piccinini, *Safely Together (detail)*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Hosfelt Gallery. Photo courtesy of John Michael Kohler Arts Center.

Gallery visitors encounter scenes of mothering, fear, and alertness. The artist's attentive depiction of recognizable physical and emotive mannerisms offers the chance to emotionally connect with the sculptures, possibly inciting responses such as empathy, disgust, and fear. The sculptures' mammalian bodies and expressions reduce the option for dissociation; any discomfort that may arise could be the result of making eye contact with an unfamiliar relative.

Piccinini, who lives and works in Australia, begins each artwork with drawings. Then, she and a small team translate the concepts and designs into sculptures. Hand- and computer-based techniques are used to create the works, which are often composed of silicone, human hair, and fiberglass.

Piccinini's artwork questions the way that contemporary technology and culture changes our understanding of what it means to be human and wonders at our relationships with—

and responsibilities toward—that which we create. While ethics are central, her approach is ambiguous and questioning rather than moralistic and didactic.

For more information about the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, visit [jmkac.org](http://jmkac.org). Admission is free. The Arts Center is located at 608 New York Ave., Sheboygan, Wis.

### About the Artist

Patricia Piccinini was born in Sierra Leone and lives in Australia. Her work encompasses sculpture, photography, video and drawing, and her practice examines the increasingly nebulous boundary between the artificial and the natural as it appears in contemporary culture and ideas.

In 2003 her exhibition *We Are Family* represented Australia at the 50th Venice Biennale before touring to the Hara Museum, Tokyo (JPN) and the Bendigo Art Gallery, (AUS). Her solo museum survey exhibitions *ComCiência* at CCBB toured to São Paulo, Brasília, Rio De Janeiro and Belo Horizonte in Brazil and was named the most popular contemporary art exhibition in 2016 by *The Art Newspaper*.

Among Piccinini's other solo museum exhibitions are *Curious Affection* at QAGOMA in Brisbane, *En Kaerlig Verden* at Arken in Copenhagen, *Relativity* at the Galway International Art Festival, *Hold Me Close To Your Heart* at Arter Space For Art in Istanbul, and *Hug: Recent Works by Patricia Piccinini* at the Frye Museum in Seattle and Des Moines Art Centre in Iowa.

Major exhibitions in nontraditional spaces include *The Shadows Calling* at Detached (Hobart, Australia), *Curious Imaginings* at the Patricia Hotel (Vancouver, Canada), and *A Miracle Constantly Repeated* in the Flinders Street Station Ballroom (Melbourne, Australia). In 2013, she was commissioned by the Centenary of Canberra (Australia) to create *The Skywhale*, which was joined in 2020 by *Skywhalepapa*.

Patricia Piccinini received a BFA from the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne in 1991. In 1994, she initiated The Basement Project Gallery in Melbourne, which she coordinated until 1996. She is represented by Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney.

In 2014, she was awarded the Melbourne Art Foundation Visual Arts Award. In 2016, she was awarded a Doctor of Visual and Performing Arts (Honora Causa) from the Victorian College of the Arts and appointed as Enterprise Professor at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne.

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### **About the John Michael Kohler Arts Center**

Founded in 1967, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center (JMKAC) is dedicated to generating creative exchanges between an international community of artists and a diverse public. Central to its mission is promoting understanding and appreciation of the work of self-taught and contemporary artists through original exhibitions, commissioned works of art, performing arts, community arts initiatives, and publications.

The Arts Center's collection focuses primarily on works by artist-environment builders, self-taught and folk artists, and works created in the Arts/Industry residency program. JMKAC is the world's leading center for research and presentation of artist-built environments.

In June 2021, the Arts Center opened the Art Preserve, a satellite campus highlighting its collection of 25,000 individual works of art by more than 30 art-environment builders. The Art Preserve features immersive displays of art environments and curated visible storage of environment components. It also serves as a resource for research on art environments and the artists who create them.

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is located at 608 New York Avenue, Sheboygan, WI. The Art Preserve is located at 3636 Lower Falls Road, Sheboygan. Admission to both is free. For more information, call 920-458-6144, or visit [jmkac.org](http://jmkac.org), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#).

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center is supported by corporate and foundation donors, government grants, and its many members. The Arts Center is not an entity of Kohler Co. or its subsidiaries.

### **FREE ADMISSION**

#### **Hours**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Thursday: 10:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

Saturday, Sunday: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

#### **Locations**

John Michael Kohler Arts Center: 608 New York Avenue, Sheboygan, WI

Art Preserve: 3636 Lower Falls Road, Sheboygan, WI