FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 27, 2020

FOUR ARTISTS EXAMINE THE ROLE OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER IN SHELDON EXHIBIT

ST. LOUIS, MO – The Sheldon Art Galleries presents Mississippi River Views, featuring photographers Jennifer Colton, John Guider and John Hilgert, and installation artist Megan Singleton, February 14 – April 11, 2020 in the Gallery of Photography. An opening reception is scheduled for Friday, February 14 from 5 – 7 p.m. The Sheldon Art Galleries are open Tuesdays, Noon – 8 p.m.; Wednesdays - Fridays, Noon – 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and one hour prior to Sheldon performances and during intermission. Admission is free. For more information on exhibitions, visit the galleries’ website at TheSheldon.org.

The exhibit examines the role the Mississippi River plays in our culture, history and environment, and includes work from Jennifer Colten’s “American Bottom,” Nashville photographer John Guider’s “The River Inside,” the late John Hilgert’s “Bottomland,” and an installation by Megan Singleton. The exhibit is organized to coincide with the Missouri History Museum’s Mighty Mississippi exhibition, running through April 18, 2021.

Gallery Talk: Tuesday, March 3 at 6 p.m. Jennifer Colten, Megan Singleton and John Guider will speak about their work and projects. Admission is free, reservations suggested but not required. Contact Paula Lincoln at plincoln@thesheldon.org or 314-533-9900 x37.

Jennifer Colten explores the representation of landscape, social and cultural geographies, and the environmental implications of land use. Addressing issues of erasure and visibility is central to her practice, and collaboration is essential, where an interdisciplinary approach is part of a larger process of engaging with community, local histories and public space. Colten’s various projects have received support from the Mid-America Arts Alliance, a Ferguson Academic Seed Grant from Washington University in St. Louis, two Artist Support Grants from the Regional Arts Commission in St Louis and Creative Activity Support grants from the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University.

In addition to private collections, Colten’s photographs have been included in a number of national and international institutions, including the Denver Art Museum; the Museum für Fotographie, Braunschweig, Germany; the Museum Hundertwasser, Vienna, Austria; and the Museo de Arte Moderno, the Museo de Antioquia, and the Bellas Artes Instituto in Colombia, South America. After receiving her M.F.A. from Massachusetts College of Art in Boston, Colten relocated to the Midwest and currently teaches photography at Washington University Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts.

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**John Guider** is an internationally-recognized, award-winning photographer and author based out of Nashville, TN. A graduate of Vanderbilt University, his largest project, “The River Inside,” chronicling his 2,500 mile solo canoe journey down the entirety of the Mississippi River, is the subject of a book by the same name and a popular traveling museum exhibition.

Guider is the recipient of many awards including a national Addy Award, the American Cancer Society’s Excalibur Award and a National Center for Creative Aging Beautiful Minds honoree. His work and adventures have been the feature of numerous magazine and newspaper articles and television broadcasts, including renowned journalist John Seigenthaler’s television program, *A Word on Words*. He has appeared as the guest speaker at The Southern Festival of Books, PhotoArts Santa Fe, The National Waterways Commission Convention, the AARP National Convention and the U.S. capitol in 2015. His work is collected in a number of museums and corporate foundations, and in 2016, was inducted into the prestigious Arts in the Embassies program for display at American Embassies around the world.

**John Hilgert** grew up in Webster Groves, and attended St. Louis Community College at Meramec. In 1981, he graduated from Webster University with a bachelor’s degree in photography. He earned a master’s degree, also in photography, at Washington University School of Fine Arts, and served as an adjunct photography instructor at St. Louis Community College at Forest Park, Washington University, St. Louis University, Webster University and University of Missouri-St. Louis. In 1999, he took a position as assistant professor of art at Webster University, where he stayed until his death in 2002. While at Webster, he was coordinator of the university’s Cecille R. Hunt Gallery.

Hilgert was a noted photographer both locally and nationally. He was the recipient of the 1988 National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Photography, 1989 Polaroid Corporation Artist Grant and a 1989-91 Missouri Arts Council Biennial Award. He was an editor of *River Styx* literary magazine, and a past president of the Society for Photographic Education-Midwest Region. His work has been included in national and international exhibits, including the exhibition “Bottomlands” at the Forum for Contemporary Art in St. Louis, 1998.

**Megan Singleton** is a practicing artist and educator in St. Louis, Missouri. Her ecology-based work crisscrosses boundaries of contemporary craft, combining sculpture, installation and hand papermaking. She received her M.F.A. in Sculpture from Louisiana State University and B.F.A. in Photography from Webster University. She actively exhibits nationally and internationally, and her work can be found in the collections of the Louisiana Art and Science Museum, the RCW Museum of Papermaking, and among numerous private collections. She has been the recipient of a RAC Artist Fellowship, the Smelser-Vallion Visiting Artist Fellowship in Taos, NM and was invited to install site-specific mural projects at Brown University in Providence, RI; Lambert Airport in St. Louis; and the Gaylord Trust Building in Lockport, IL. She has participated in residencies at A Studio in the Woods, Craft Alliance, Doel Reed Center for Art, Haystack Mountain School of Craft, Great Sand Dunes National Park, Kingsbrea Gardens and the Tides Institute and Museum.

**Image:** Jennifer Colten, *Mound [8714]*, 2019, inkjet print, image size 31 in. x 43 in.