

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 26, 2021

Blaffer Art Museum Presents 'Molly Zuckerman-Hartung: Comic Relief'
On view October 31, 2021 – March 13, 2022

HOUSTON—August 26, 2021—The Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston is proud to present the first major museum survey dedicated to the work of the iconoclastic American artist, writer, and educator Molly Zuckerman-Hartung. The exhibition, titled *Comic Relief*, will open in Houston on October 31, 2021 and run through March 13, 2022. Featuring over 100 artworks made across the past 20 years, this exhibition celebrates multiple dimensions of Zuckerman-Hartung's punk-influenced aesthetic—tracing an expansive practice that spans assemblage, paintings and sculptures, drawings and prints, photographs, writing, and performance.

In her formative years, Zuckerman-Hartung participated in Riot Grrrl—the 1990s underground punk scene that originated in the Pacific Northwest and exhorted radical female empowerment through collaborative community-building and the rejection of male-dominated power structures. This involvement had a lasting effect on the artist, instilling within her a permanent inclination toward inquiry and critique, as well as a deep-rooted sense of creative resistance to societal boundaries, cultural norms, and conventional aesthetics.

Since the mid-2000s, Zuckerman-Hartung has primarily identified as a painter—often rethinking, performing, or activating aspects of the medium's long history, various visual languages, and critical strategies as a starting place for her own socially-conscious practice. She is a prodigious alchemist, prolific in her output and experimentation, restlessly moving between ideas and materials. The artist's densely-cobbled, largely abstract objects vary in scale and evocatively draw on references to feminist and queer theories, pop culture, literature, psychoanalysis, art history, current events, comedy, and her life. With a slapstick sensibility and radical self-awareness, Zuckerman-Hartung's work creates a unique lexicon for illuminating the motley dimensions of our daily systems and psychosocial landscapes.

The exhibition is accompanied by a 220-page catalogue co-published by Inventory Press, featuring an interview with the artist and texts by exhibition curator Tyler Blackwell, art historian and curator Kate Nesin, archivist Lisa Darms, and artist Annie Bielski.

Molly Zuckerman-Hartung: Comic Relief is organized for the Blaffer Art Museum by Tyler Blackwell, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Associate Curator.

For more information or high-resolution images, please contact infoblaffer@uh.edu.

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Generous support for this exhibition is provided by Heiji & Brian Black, Marilyn & Larry Fields, Sandra & Jack Guthman, and Shirley & John Olar. Major support for the exhibition publication is provided by Lester Marks, Rachel Uffner Gallery, and Corbett vs. Dempsey.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Molly Zuckerman-Hartung's (b. 1975, Los Gatos, CA) work is held in a number of public art collections, including the Aspen Art Museum, the DePaul University Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Booth School of Business at the University of Chicago, and the Walker Art Center. In 2014, Zuckerman-Hartung was included in the *Whitney Biennial*, and she is a 2013 recipient of the Louis Comfort Tiffany Grant. Zuckerman-Hartung co-founded the Julius Caesar project space in Chicago in 2007, and she was one of the founding organizers of Ladyfest 2000—a feminist conference and performance showcase that has been revived around the world. She also has written major texts on Susan Sontag, Michelle Grabner, Carrie Schneider, and Magalie Guerin. From 2015 to 2021, she served as faculty in Painting & Printmaking at the Yale University School of Art.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Hours beginning September 1, 2021

Tues-Fri, 10-5pm

Sat-Sun, 12-5pm

Admission is always free.

ABOUT BLAFFER ART MUSEUM

Founded in 1973, the Blaffer Art Museum endeavors to further the understanding of contemporary art through exhibitions, publications, and public programs. As the gateway between the University of Houston's Central campus and the City of Houston, Blaffer Art Museum is a catalyst for creative innovation, experimentation, and scholarship. Its exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public, create community through dialogue and participation, and inspire an appreciation for the visual arts as a vital force in shaping contemporary culture.

Lead annual support for exhibitions and programming at the Blaffer Art Museum is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Major annual funding is provided by Leslie & Brad Bucher and the John P. McGovern Foundation. Generous support is provided by Blaffer Art Museum Advisory Board members. The following donors sustain Blaffer Art Museum in perpetuity by giving through endowments: Cecil Amelia Blaffer von Furstenberg Endowment for Exhibitions and Programs, Jane Dale Owen Endowment in the Blaffer Art Museum, Jo and Jim Furr Exhibition Endowment in the Blaffer Art Museum, Sarah C. Morian Endowment, and the Sarah Campbell Blaffer Foundation Blaffer Gallery Endowment.

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