

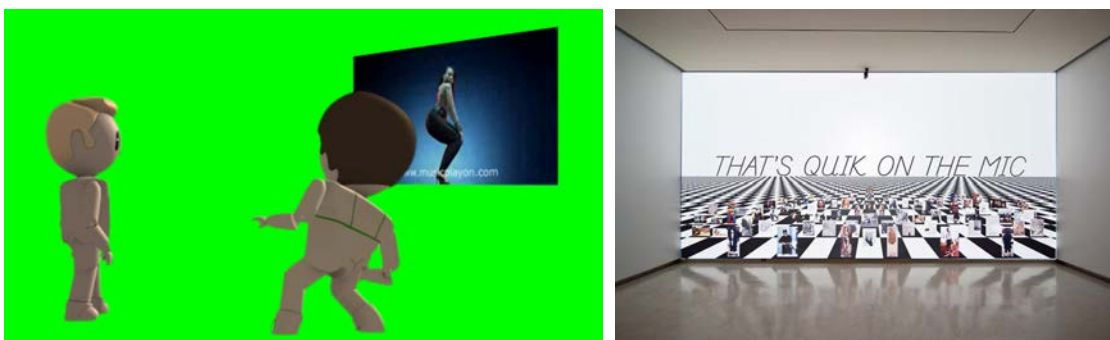
HAMMER

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: August 31, 2015

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The Hammer Museum Presents
UH-OH: Frances Stark 1991-2015
On view October 11, 2015 – January 24, 2016



(Los Angeles, CA)—The Hammer presents ***UH-OH: Frances Stark 1991-2015***, the most comprehensive survey to date of the L.A.-based artist Frances Stark (b. 1967, Newport Beach, CA). Curated by Hammer curator Ali Subotnick with Emily Gonzalez-Jarrett, curatorial associate, in close collaboration with the artist, *UH-OH: Frances Stark 1991-2015* brings together more than two decades of Stark's poetic compositions and autobiographical reflections. The exhibition features 125 works, including Stark's early carbon drawings, intricate collages, and mixed-media paintings as well as her more recent videos. *UH-OH* delves into Stark's use of text—including words and phrases from pop songs and literature—with imagery to create visual material that evokes the process of writing and explores doubt and pride, beauty, motherhood, artistry, class, literature, education, and communication. *UH-OH: Frances Stark 1991-2015* will be on view at the Hammer Museum from **October 11, 2015 to January 24, 2016**.

"Frances Stark is one of the most dynamic and challenging artists of her time—and a bit of a hometown hero. She is an 'artist's artist' who is critically accomplished but whose work is not yet widely known outside of the gallery and museum communities," said **Ann Philbin, Director, Hammer Museum**. "She is so deserving and we are honored to be presenting this survey to a larger public audience."

"Autobiography figures prominently in her work, but Frances is well-read and knowledgeable on subjects high and low, and her work engages intimately with that of other writers, artists, and musicians. She carefully dissects and unpacks their words, pictures, and songs," commented **Ali Subotnick**, curator, Hammer Museum. "Mirroring the density of subjects in the work, the exhibition is

Images (L-R): . Frances Stark, *My Best Thing*, 2011. Digital video, color, sound. 100:00 min. Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Purchase. Image courtesy of Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York.; Frances Stark, *Bobby Jesus's Alma Mater b/w Reading the Book of David and/or Paying Attention Is Free*, 2013. Multichannel projection with sound, inkjet mural, and takeaway offset posters. 7:20 min. Edition 3 of 5. Purchased jointly by Museum Contemporary Art Chicago with funds provided by Marshall Field's by exchange and Hammer Museum, Los Angeles.

choreographed to aid viewers in their own close readings, emphasizing recurring jokes, rhymes, metaphors, and cultural references."

One of Stark's most recent works, *Bobby Jesus's Alma Mater b/w Reading the Book of David and/or Paying Attention Is Free* (2013), makes its Los Angeles debut in this show. This highly-celebrated video installation features text projected above a printed wall mural of a black-and-white checkerboard floor populated with images of a wide variety of icons from her **muse/protégé Bobby Jesus** to Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, Stark herself, and George H. W. Bush. The projected text is based on Stark's conversations with Bobby Jesus, "a self-described resident of 'planet hood' who has become her studio apprentice and friend," and includes lyrics from Prince, DJ Quik, The Fall, and the Beatles. The work is a tour de force, complete with music, writing, pictures, influences, heroes and antiheroes, personal and public, high and low.

Stark has continuously experimented with alternative modes of expression while **tracking technological advancements in communication**. *My Best Thing* (2011) is composed of edited Skype exchanges between Stark and two online paramours (who met via Chatroulette), and animated with the free software Xtranormal. The feature-length digital animation, which garnered huge accolades when it debuted at the 2011 Venice Biennale, addresses contemporary online reality in a lighthearted yet philosophical way while asking us to consider the relationship between sex and work. Intimate, often titillating moments are broken up by discussions of life, art, literature, music, and politics. Drawings from the early 2000s feature icons from word processing applications while the PowerPoint slide show *Structures that fit my opening (and other parts considered in relation to their whole)* (2006) marked a significant transition for Stark, as she explored alternative modes for writing her life. Most recently Stark has used her Instagram posts for films and photographic works.

"I am very interested in exploring the possibility of a much broader appeal as a *figure* (rather than an artist summed up by a theme or medium) in my home city of Los Angeles," said **Frances Stark**. "[The exhibition's title, *UH-OH*] involves the voice, the human utterance. It is the voice connecting to intuition, locating the voice in the body, or connecting utterance to perception." The title has a visceral onomatopoeic quality that also points to Stark's humorous, yet demanding, brand of institutional critique and self-reflexivity.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully-illustrated catalogue with **newly commissioned essays by Ali Subotnick and Howard Singerman**, Phyllis and Josef Caroff Professor of Fine Arts, Dept. Chair, Hunter College, New York. Published by Del Monico Prestel, the monograph includes a special section of texts by various artists and writers in which they revisit previous discussions with the artist about specific concepts in her work. Contributors include: Domenick Ammirati, Rhea Anastas, Andrew Berardini, Bridget Donahue, Joanna Fiduccia, Donatien Grau, Christoph Gurk, Linda Norden, Brad Phillips, Lanka Tattersall, and Jan Verwoert, among others.

Stark's work was featured in a **2002 Hammer Projects exhibition** consisting of the sixteen-work series collectively titled *The Unspeakable Compromise of the Portable Work of Art* that engaged with Daniel Buren's early 1970s writings on "the art system." In 2009, she served on the Hammer's Artist Council. In 2010, Stark selected works from the Museum's Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts for the *Houseguest* exhibition series, and her work was included in group exhibitions *All of This and Nothing* (2011), curated by Anne Ellegood and Douglas Fogle, and *Selections from the Hammer Contemporary*

Collection (2010). The artist is represented in the museum's collection by nine works including *My Best Thing* and *Bobby Jesus's Alma Mater*.

ABOUT FRANCES STARK

Frances Stark holds an MFA from Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, and a BA in Humanities from San Francisco State University. Her videos, drawings, performances, and other works have been the subject of solo exhibitions at The Art Institute of Chicago (2015); Hayward Gallery, London (2014); the Julia Stoschek Collection, Düsseldorf, Germany (2013); Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver (2012); MoMA PS1, Long Island City, New York (2011); Performa 11, New York (2011); Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, CA (2011); the MIT List Center for Visual Arts, Cambridge, MA (2010); Center for Contemporary Art, Glasgow (2010); Nottingham Contemporary (2009); Portikus, Frankfurt, Germany (2008); Secession, Vienna (2008); Culturgest, Lisbon (2008); and the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (2006). Her work has been featured in important international group exhibitions including the 2013 Carnegie International, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, PA; the Venice Biennale 54th International Art Exhibition (2011); *All of This and Nothing*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2011); the Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Moscow; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; and the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2008). Stark was a professor at the University of Southern California Roski School of Art and Design from 2005-2014. She is the recipient of the 2015 Absolut Art Award.

CREDIT

UH-OH: Frances Stark 1991-2015 is organized by the Hammer Museum and curated by Ali Subotnick, curator, with Emily Gonzalez-Jarrett, curatorial associate.

UH-OH: Frances Stark 1991-2015 is made possible with support from Brenda Potter. Generous support is also provided by Karyn Kohl and Maurice Marciano. Additional funding is provided by Beth Rudin DeWoody and The May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation.

Media sponsorship is provided by KCRW 89.9FM.

RELATED PROGRAMS

Casa de mi Padre

Sunday, October 25, 2 p.m.

Frances Stark recognized the political subtext and artistry in this Spanish-language comedy about Mexican brothers (Will Ferrell and Diego Luna) caught in a telenovela-style plot that includes a nefarious drug kingpin (Gael García Bernal). Humor ensues. The actor **Will Ferrell**, director **Matt Piedmont**, writer **Andrew Steele**, and producer **Jessica Elbaum** join Stark for a post-screening conversation about the distinctly unfunny consequences of America's appetite for drugs. (2012, Dir. Matt Piedmont, 84 min.)

Alexyss K. Tylor & Frances Stark: Vagina Power

Tuesday, October 27, 7:30 p.m.

The author, speaker, and public-access channel host **Alexyss K. Tylor** presents a world in which women are uninhibited, unafraid, and completely aware of "Vagina Power." As the mainstream media double down on the objectification inherent in pole dance culture, Tylor presents a new paradigm of female expression and relationships in which gender is plumbed but neither penis nor vagina is a weapon. The artist Frances Stark interviews Tylor.

My Best Thing**Wednesday, October 28, 7:30 p.m.**

First exhibited at the 54th Venice Biennale, Frances Stark's *My Best Thing* (2011) is a feature-length video produced using a text-to-speech animation program. It is based on video chats about sex that Stark conducted with two Italian suitors. The conversations rapidly devolve—or should we say, evolve—into larger discussions on a variety of topics, leading to intimate ephemeral and intellectual engagement. A Q&A with Stark follows the screening. (Frances Stark, *My Best Thing*, 2011. Digital video, color, sound. 100 min. Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. Purchase. Image courtesy of Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York.)

Ian F. Svenonius**Wednesday, November 4, 7:30 p.m.**

Ian F. Svenonius is the singer for underground music groups such as the Nation of Ulysses, the Make Up, Weird War, and Chain & the Gang. The author of the books *The Psychic Soviet*, *Supernatural Strategies for Making a Rock n Roll Group*, and *Censorship Now!*, he also hosts the talk show *Soft Focus*. Svenonius is a leading organizer of the antiauthoritarian Committee for Ending Freedom as well as the Society for a Different Tomorrow.

Freeway: Crack in the System**Tuesday, December 1, 7:30 p.m.**

The real story behind America's drug war, complete with drug dealers, dirty cops, and government complicity, this film was selected by the artist Frances Stark. At the center of it all is the rise, fall, and redemption of "**Freeway**" **Rick Ross**—a street hustler who became the king of crack. Followed by a Q&A with "Freeway" Rick Ross and others. (2015, Dir. Mark Levin, 103 min.)

Project Fatherhood**Thursday, December 10, 7:30 p.m.**

In 2010 the activist **Big Mike Cummings** invited **Jorja Leap** to bring her internationally recognized expertise in postwar settings such as Bosnia and Kosovo to Los Angeles's Project Fatherhood. Based in Watts, the organization supports men determined to build their role as fathers. Leap's new book follows the men's struggle with the pain of their own losses, chronic poverty, and unemployment as well as their drive to do better. **Dr. Belinda Tucker**, UCLA Professor of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, moderates a conversation with Leap and Cummings.

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ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum at UCLA offers collections, exhibitions, and programs that span the classic to the contemporary in art, architecture, and design. The Hammer's international exhibition program focuses on wide-ranging thematic and monographic exhibitions, highlighting contemporary art since the 1960s and the work of emerging artists through Hammer Projects and the Hammer's biennial, *Made in L.A.* As a cultural center, the Hammer Museum offers nearly 300 free public programs a year, including lectures, readings, symposia, film screenings, and music performances at the Billy Wilder Theater which also houses the UCLA Film & Television Archive. The Hammer is home of the Armand Hammer Collection of American and European paintings, as well as the Armand Hammer Daumier and Contemporaries

Collection and the Hammer Contemporary Collection. The Hammer Contemporary Collection focuses on art of all media since 1960 with an emphasis on works of the last ten years, works on paper, and art made in Los Angeles. The museum also houses the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts—comprising more than 45,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists' books from the Renaissance to the present—and oversees the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden at UCLA. Free admission to the Hammer Museum is made possible through the generosity of benefactors Erika J. Glazer and Brenda R. Potter.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

Admission to all exhibitions and programs at the Hammer Museum is free.

Visit www.hammer.ucla.edu for current exhibition and program information and call (310) 443-7041 for tours.

Hours: Tuesday – Friday 11 a.m. – 8 p.m., Saturday & Sunday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Closed Mondays and national holidays. The Hammer is located at 10899 Wilshire Boulevard in Westwood, Los Angeles. Parking is available onsite for \$3 (maximum 3 hours) or for a \$3 flat rate after 6 p.m.