

## PRESS RELEASE

# Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

## EXHIBITION OPENING JENNIE C. JONES: COMPILATION

December 12, 2015–March 27, 2016

### OPENING RECEPTION:

*Jennie C. Jones: Compilation*  
Friday, December 11, 2015  
6:30–9PM

**ARTIST TALK: Jennie C. Jones**  
Saturday, December 12, 2015  
2PM



Jennie C. Jones  
*Blues in C Sharp Minor (for Teddy Wilson)*, 2015  
Acoustic absorber panel and acrylic on canvas  
48 x 48 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York

Houston, TX (November 19, 2015)—Through exhaustive research and imaginative talent, Jennie C. Jones brings to light the unlikely parallels that emerged between the visual arts and jazz during the social and cultural upheavals in the late 1950s. A resistance to tradition in favor of experimentation gave rise to an avant-garde in the visual arts and in jazz. These imprints exist as tangible markers of social evolution and political strivings. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is pleased to present the mid-career survey *Jennie C. Jones: Compilation*, which chronicles Jones's practice over an eleven-year period and includes the artist's iconic *Acoustic Paintings*, early works on paper, sculpture, and sound works. The exhibition will debut a suite of new *Acoustic Paintings* along with a site-specific installation created for her presentation at CAMH.

Formally trained as a painter, Jones is a conceptual artist working between painting, sculpture, and sound to mine the territory of Modernism and the abstract and minimalist painting traditions, combined with experimental jazz. Adept in a variety of media, Jones often plays upon the perception of sound within the tradition of the visual arts through her use of unconventional materials. For Jones, the act

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Jennie C. Jones  
*Duchamp's Inner Ear*, 2014–15  
Altered 1923 Victrola part and acrylic paint  
17 x 13 x 16 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York

of listening, as well as the modes thereof, become in and of themselves part of her practice, which has evolved from literal references to music in early drawings and collages to more nuanced and multifaceted installations that engage the viewer visually and aurally.

Jones began working in drawing and collage in part because she didn't have a studio in which to paint. Rather than see this lack of space as a limitation, the artist used it to focus on reducing visual information to its most essential state and translating sound into visual art. The earliest work featured in the exhibition is a suite of drawings titled *Speak*, made in 2004. The line drawings are sparse, discrete depictions of speakers and audio cable.

Jones soon began to integrate collage into her drawings, often using found imagery featuring sound systems from magazines and product packaging. Her practice of reducing and fragmenting images of listening devices would generate several series of works on paper, including *Sony Walkman* (2008) in which she extracted design elements of what was once the state-of-the-art listening device. Eventually, these early drawings started to manifest as real audio cables and other music residue—like CD cases—into sculptures and large-scale wall installations. Several of these works, entitled *SHHH* (2014), are featured in the exhibition. These works—created with noise-canceling instrument cable, cable ties, and endpin jacks—are attached to nothing but the ceilings, walls, and floors. Jones seeks to transform these modest materials into a minimalist gesture, and they are as much about silence as they are drawings in space.

Jones's recent exhibitions often feature a blend of painting, sound, and sculpture. From 2010 onward, her sculptures have been inspired, in part, by Marcel Duchamp (French, naturalized American, 1887–1968), whose repurposing of everyday objects revolutionized the visual arts in the early twentieth century. Jones often manipulates but does not alter everyday objects related to sound—objects that belong to modes and systems of listening to sound or producing it, as well as systems of organizing it—to generate implied sound although the works themselves are silent. She also plays upon the rapid evolution of these devices by bringing archaic listening devices and equipment back to the present. The most recent sculpture featured in the exhibition is a specific homage to Duchamp, *Duchamp's Inner Ear* (2014–15). Jones routinely scours eBay for antiquated audio equipment and obsolete objects related to sound recording and playback; in this case, she acquired and altered the horn-shaped speaker of a 1923 Victrola phonograph.

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The aesthetic and political resonances of Jones’s unlikely sources, which were revolutionary in their own right—minimalism in sculpture, abstraction in painting, and experimental jazz in music—are evident in the bodies of work she has created in all the media she employs. Jones frequently uses iconic phrasing from jazz vocalists and instrumentalists as raw material that she fragments, disrupts, and dissolves into associative sounds, which in turn function as distinct installations or in combination with sculpture or installations of her now emblematic *Acoustic Paintings*. These *Acoustic Paintings*—minimalist in nature—are composed using monochromatic canvases with sound-absorbing panels that are highlighted with pops of color. Jones says she likes the panels, normally used to minimize echoes and reverberations in auditoriums and the like, because they are “working.” The resulting paintings, often presented as a suite or installation, evoke a physiological response by the viewer, whose recognition of the material triggers an internal expectation of sound. Says Jones, “I always say they’re active even when there’s no sound in the room; they are affecting the subtlest of sounds in the space—dampening and absorbing even the human voice.”

Since debuting the acoustic panel paintings in 2011 in an exhibition at The Kitchen in New York, Jones has created three distinct series of paintings based on the “tri-tone”—a musical term expressing a particular interval between notes. Installations featuring these works are often titled with a double entendre related to musical notation, audio devices, and sound constructs, such as *Higher Resonance*, *Tone*, and *Absorb/Diffuse*. Included in her exhibition at CAMH are several suites of *Acoustic Paintings*, including her most recent body of work done in shades of blue, from midnight to navy. With titles like *Blue Moments*, *Bastard Blues*, and *Blues in C Sharp Minor (for Teddy Wilson)* (all 2015), the artist delves into the meaning, both visual and audible, of the “blues” continuing her exploration into the intersections of sound, politics, history, and the practice of minimalist painting.

*Jennie C. Jones: Compilation* is curated by Valerie Cassel Oliver, Senior Curator at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. The exhibition is on view December 12, 2015–March 27, 2017.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jennie C. Jones was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1968. She currently lives and works in Brooklyn. She attended Rutgers University’s Mason Gross School of the Arts, where she received her MFA in 1996. She has participated in numerous prestigious artists’ residency and fellowship programs, both national and international,



Jennie C. Jones  
Photo: Jason Frank Rothenberg

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including Cité Internationale des Arts–Paris, France (2002–3); The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Residency at the World Trade Center (1999); Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (1996), where she recently returned as faculty; and the prestigious Robert Rauschenberg Foundation residency. Her work has been featured in numerous national and international venues, including Kunstquartier Bethanien, Berlin, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2011); The Kitchen, New York (2011); The Menil Collection, Houston, and The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2012), among many others. Her most recent exhibitions include *Tone* at Sikkema, Jenkins & Co. NY (2014) and *Higher Resonance* at The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (2013), which marks her first solo museum exhibition. Jones was also included in the 2015 group exhibition *The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. In 2013, Jones was the recipient of the prestigious Wein Prize, awarded by The Studio Museum in Harlem. Her work was recently acquired by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in NY.

### PUBLICATION

*Jennie C. Jones: Compilation* will be accompanied by a significant monograph published by Gregory R. Miller & Co., featuring the artist's paintings, drawings, works on paper, and sculpture. The publication will include an introduction and essay by the organizing curator, Valerie Cassel Oliver, as well as essays by Hilton Als and George E. Lewis, in addition to a conversation between Jennie C. Jones and Huey Copeland. The monograph will also feature color and black-and-white images of the works presented in the exhibition, a bibliography of general reading, and a chronology of the artist's life and work. The overall scope and comprehensive material featured in the accompanying catalogue promises to serve as a scholarly reader and a critical and lasting document for the exhibition.

### PUBLIC PROGRAMS

All events are free and open to the public and take place at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston unless otherwise noted. For complete listings and current information, please check [www.camh.org](http://www.camh.org).

### EXHIBITION SUPPORT

*Jennie C. Jones: Compilation* is generously supported by Deutsche Bank, Arthur Lewis and Hau Ngyun, Mr. Bernard Lumpkin and Mr. Carmine D. Boccuzzi, Elliot Perry and Sikkema Jenkins & Co.

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*Jennie C. Jones: Compilation*  
Friday, December 11, 2015  
6:30–9PM

### ARTIST TALK: Jennie C. Jones

Saturday, December 12, 2015  
2PM

### TALK: Hilton Als

Saturday, January 30, 2016  
2PM

**PRESS RELEASE**

This exhibition has been made possible by the patrons, benefactors and donors to the Museum's Friends of Steel Exhibitions: Director's Circle—Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen, Faye Sarofim, Ms. Louisa Stude Sarofim. Curator's Circle—Dillon Kyle Architecture, Inc., Mr. and Mrs. I. H. Kempner III. Major Exhibition Circle—A Fare Extraordinaire, Bergner and Johnson Design, Jereann Chaney, Sara Paschall Dodd, Marita and J.B. Fairbanks, Greg Fourticq, Barbara and Michael Gamson, Brenda and William Goldberg, Blakely and Trey Griggs, George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation, Leslie and Mark Hull, Jackson and Company, Louise D. Jamail, Anne and David Kirkland, KPMG, LLP, Beverly and Howard Robinson, Lauren Rottet, Robin and Andrew Schirrmeister, Yellow Cab Houston, Mr. Wallace Wilson, Michael Zilkha.

The catalogue accompanying the exhibition is made possible by a grant from The Brown Foundation, Inc.

**CAMH EDUCATION SUPPORT**

The Museum's education and outreach programming has been made possible by the patrons, benefactors and donors to its Families of Steel Programming: Vera and Andy Baker, Mary and Marcel Barone, Louise D. Jamail, Kinder Morgan Foundation, Robert and Pearl Wallis Knox Foundation, Leticia Loya, Marian and Speros Martel Foundation Endowment, M.D. Anderson Foundation, Elisabeth McCabe, Andrew R. McFarland, Nordstrom, Nancy O'Connor, Cabrina and Steven Owsley, Ms. Louisa Stude Sarofim, Texas Commission on the Arts, Kim and Gerard Trevino, Bridget and Patrick Wade.

**GENERAL SUPPORT**

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The Museum's operations and programs are made possible through the generosity of the Museum's trustees, patrons, members and donors. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston receives partial operating support from The Brown Foundation, Inc., Houston Endowment, the City of Houston through the Houston Museum District Association, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Texas Commission on the Arts, The Wortham Foundation, Inc. and artMRKT Productions. CAMH also thanks its artist benefactors for their support including Michael Bise, Bruce High Quality Foundation,



Jennie C. Jones  
*Speak*, 2004  
Ink on paper  
One from a set of six, each 12 x 9 1/2 inches  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York

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Julia Dault, Keltie Ferris, Mark Flood, Barnaby Furnas, Theaster Gates, Jeffrey Gibson, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Jim Hodges, Joan Jonas, Jennie C. Jones, Maya Lin, Julian Lorber, Robert Mangold, Melissa Miller, Marilyn Minter, Angel Otero, McKay Otto, Enoc Perez, Rob Pruitt, Matthew Ritchie, Dario Robleto, Ed Ruscha, Cindy Sherman, Shinique Smith, John Sparagana, Al Souza, James Surls, Sam Taylor-Johnson, William Wegman, and Brenna Youngblood.

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### CAMH MISSION

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is a leading destination to experience innovative art. CAMH actively encourages public engagement with its exhibitions through its educational programs, publications, and online presence.

**ALWAYS FRESH, ALWAYS FREE**

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is located at 5216 Montrose Boulevard, at the corner of Montrose and Bissonnet, in the heart of Houston's Museum District. Hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 10AM–7PM, Thursday 10AM–9PM, Saturday 10AM–6PM, and Sunday 12PM–6PM. Admission is always free. For more information, visit [www.camh.org](http://www.camh.org) or call 713 284 8250.