

Exhibition Announcement

Christopher Knowles: In a Word

December 15, 2017–March 25, 2018



The Sundance Kid is Beautiful performance installation view, 2015, in *Christopher Knowles: In a Word*, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania. Photo: Constance Mensh.

HOUSTON, TX (October 10, 2017)—The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) is pleased to present *Christopher Knowles: In a Word*. Brooklyn-based artist Christopher Knowles is most often regarded as a poet and painter, yet his output is broader than this classification suggests. The exhibition brings to Texas his most comprehensive survey to date, spans many mediums—text, sound, painting, drawing, sculpture, and recorded performance—and includes works completed in collaboration with esteemed theater director Robert Wilson. Opening December 15, 2017, the exhibition will continue through March 25, 2018.

Christopher Knowles: In a Word features works that record and reorder the everyday materials around us through the use of incantatory rhythms and repetitions. Knowles's works include typewritten drawings of language permutations, reimagined song lyrics, and painting in which interlocking blocks of raw color depict family, close friends, and architectural landmarks.



Christopher Knowles, *Untitled* from the portfolio "Typings," 1986, silkscreen on Ivorite paper, 25 1/2 x 19 3/4 inches. Courtesy the artist.

Knowles's sculptures are precise and direct in their construction: polka-dotted cones, brilliantly-hued paper cutouts, Lego structures, and collections of wind-up alarm clocks. Taken together, Knowles's art places him squarely in conversations with Laurie Anderson, Joseph Beuys, Stuart Sherman, Paul Thek, and other twentieth-century artists who opened a large window on do-it-yourself production, interiority, and the shifting registers of the artist's voice in social settings.

"Top 40 hits, relations between people, tour stops, favored items, radio advertisements, and the presidents: all get recounted and reordered and redefined with regularity into playful and delicate if blunt patterns" in Knowles's art explains Anthony Elms, the organizing curator. The familiarity of objects and subjects within the works draw in the viewer, but their restructuring forces a reconsideration of meaning and hierarchies of visual culture. A series of American flags built from Legos are juxtaposed with advertising slogans drawn with markers. All elements are equally familiar and yet made strange by their combinations.

Christopher Knowles: In a Word is organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), University of Pennsylvania and is curated by ICA Chief Curator Anthony Elms and guest curator Hilton Als, writer and chief theater critic for *The New Yorker*. The presentation at CAMH is facilitated by Curator Dean Daderko.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Christopher Knowles has exhibited his works widely throughout the world including: Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Of Mice and Men: 4th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Germany; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, England; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York. He has performed solo or as part of the Byrd Hoffman company extensively, including: White Columns, New York, New York; Thalia Theatre, Hamburg, Germany; The Kitchen, New York, New York; the Louvre Museum, Paris, France; and touring duets with Robert Wilson the world-over.

PUBLICATION

An exhibition catalogue published by Gregory R. Miller & Co. includes essays by Anthony Elms and Hilton Als, a reprint of an autobiographical text by Knowles, and a new essay by art historian Lauren DiGiulio.

OPENING RECEPTION

Christopher Knowles: In a Word

Friday, December 15, 2017 | 6:30–9PM

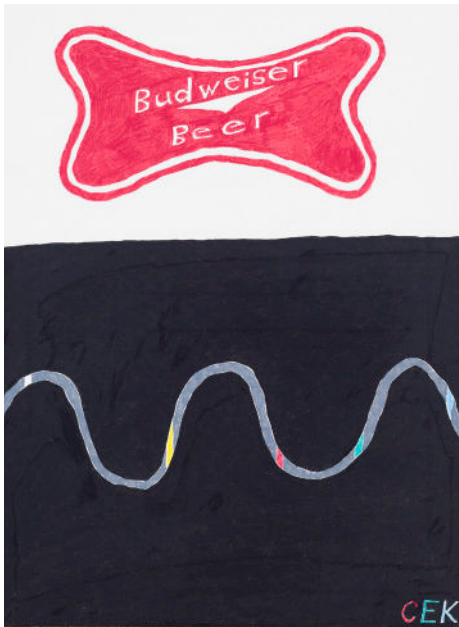
Celebrate the opening of Christopher Knowles: In a Word, his most comprehensive exhibition to date and spanning a wide array of mediums. Beverages will be available for purchase at CAMH's cash bar.

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

EXHIBITION ANNOUNCEMENT

5216 Montrose Boulevard, Houston, Texas 77006

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Christopher Knowles, *Untitled*, 2012. Archival marker on canvas. 24 x 18 inches. Courtesy the artist and Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

These events are free, open to the public, and take place at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. Seating is limited. Please check CAMH.ORG for the most current information.

IN CONVERSATION: Anthony Elms

Saturday, December 16, 2017 | 2-3PM

Join Anthony Elms, Chief Curator of the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania for a gallery walk-through of *Christopher Knowles: In a Word*.

WORDS & ART: Writing Workshop

Saturday, January 27, 2018 | 1-2PM

Explore the exhibition, using prompts, group discussion, and your imagination. We'll delve deeply into the artist's world through stories and poems. This workshop is open to all writing levels.

PERFORMANCE: Musiqa

Thursday, February 8, 2018 | 6:30-7:30PM

In conjunction with the exhibition *Christopher Knowles: In a Word*, Musiqa presents a special concert inspired by his work and poetry.

WORDS & ART: Reading

Thursday, March 8, 2018 | 6:30-7:30PM

Houston-based authors and poets share new work inspired by the exhibition.

FAMILY DAY

Saturday, March 17, 2018 | 1-4PM

Come participate in hands-on activities inspired by current exhibitions.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Major support for *Christopher Knowles: In a Word* has been provided by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Additional funding has been provided by Pamela Toub Berkman & David J. Berkman, Julie & Larry Bernstein, Charles X Block, Carol T. & John G. Finley, Cheri S. & Steven M. Friedman, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, Kirk Kirkpatrick, Toby Devan Lewis, and Mari & Peter Shaw. Support for *The Sundance Kid Is Beautiful* at ICA has been provided by the Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation.

GENERAL SUPPORT

Support for CAMH is generously provided by the Museum's Board of Trustees and their families: Allison and David Ayers, Candace Baggett and Ron Restrepo, Vera and Andy Baker, James M. Bell, Jr., Jereann Chaney,

MEDIA CONTACT
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EXHIBITION OPENING
CHRISTOPHER KNOWLES: IN A WORD

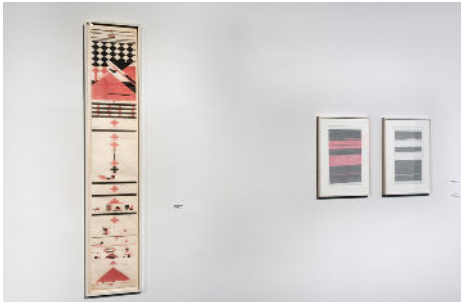
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Christopher Knowles: In a Word, installation view, 2016. Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania. Photo: Constance Mensh.

Estela and David A. Cockrell, Ruth Dreessen and Tom Van Laan, Barbara and Michael Gamson, Dan and Eleanor Gilbane, Blakely and Trey Griggs, Melissa and Albert J. Grobmyer IV, Catherine Baen Hennessy and Matt Hennessy, Leslie and Mark Hull, Louise Jamail, Dillon Kyle and Sam Lasseter, Erica and Benjy Levit, Lucinda and Javier Loya, Catherine and George Masterson, Libbie Masterson, Greg McCord, Mac and Karen McManus, Jack and Anne Moriniere,



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CAMH's operations are made possible in part by awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Texas Commission on the Arts.



CAMH also thanks its artist benefactors for their support, including Chris Beckman, Michael Bise, Bruce High Quality Foundation, Mel Chin, Julia Dault, James Drake, Mark Flood, Jeffrey Gibson, Wayne Gilbert, Roberta Harris, Camille Henrot, Oliver Herring, Joan Jonas, David Kelley, Julian Lorber, Marilyn Minter, Nic Nicosia, McKay Otto, Joyce Pensato, Gavin Perry, Susie Rosmarin, Jacolby Satterwhite, Shinique Smith, John Sparagana, Mary Weatherford, Carrie Mae Weems, Haegue Yang, and Brenna Youngblood.

United is the Official Airline of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston.



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.

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 CAMH.ORG or call 713.284.8250.