

## PRESS RELEASE

# Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

## SENIOR CURATOR VALERIE CASSEL OLIVER DEPARTING THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS MUSEUM HOUSTON



Photo: Eric Hester

Houston, TX (June 2, 2017)—It is with both great pride and profound sadness that the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) announces the departure of Valerie Cassel Oliver as Senior Curator. Cassel Oliver’s final monographic exhibition at CAMH will be, *Annabeth Rosen: Fired, Broken, Gathered, Heaped*. Rosen’s career survey will open August 18, 2017 and be on view until November 26th in the Museum’s Brown Foundation Gallery.

“It has been a great privilege to work with this renowned Houstonian for the last eight years. Valerie’s contributions to visual arts in Texas are nonpareil. There are only a few American curators who have had such a profound effect on the field in the last decade—having rewritten the canon of art history and gained significant attention for many previously overlooked geniuses, especially for artists of color. I hear her name spoken with reverence by young curators today. It has been marvelous for those of us in Houston to have such intimate and close encounters with her exhibitions,” Director Bill Arning said.

Cassel Oliver has been responsible for some of CAMH’s most lauded exhibitions, including: *Splat Boom Pow! The Influence of Comics in Contemporary Art*; *Double Consciousness: Black Conceptual Art Since 1970*; *Hand+Made: The Performative Impulse in Art and Craft*; *Black Light White Noise: Sound and Light in Contemporary Art*; *Benjamin Patterson: Born in the State of FLUX/us*; *Radical Presence: Black Performance in Contemporary Art*; *Alvin Baltrop: Dreams Into Glass*; *Jennie C. Jones: Compilation*, as well as a drawing survey of work by Trenton Doyle Hancock. These exhibitions are but a few of the shows that she has mounted in her 16 years at CAMH.

“I am exceptionally proud of the projects that I have been able to realize at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston over the last 16 years. The unwavering support

## PRESS RELEASE

from the Board, Director, and my colleagues have been invaluable and has made it possible to spearhead the many projects and publications that serve to heighten the public's consciousness about the wealth and vitality of contemporary art.

It has been a privilege to contribute to CAMH's mission and illustrious history—a history that inspired me as a teenager growing up in this city.

I am excited about the next chapter of my career and know that it will allow me to build upon the intellectual rigor and tremendous curiosity that CAMH has fostered for so many years," Cassel Oliver said.

The Museum and the Board of Trustees also would like to extend its sincerest congratulations to Cassel Oliver on her position at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA). She will be the newly appointed Sydney and Frances Lewis Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art and is charged with developing the VMFA's collection of modern and contemporary art as well as building on her already impressive exhibition record. She will be opening a much needed and long-awaited survey of Howardena Pindell's work at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (MCA) on February 24, 2018, a project developed while at CAMH with co-curator Naomi Beckwith, the Marilyn and Larry Fields Curator at the MCA Chicago. We look forward to seeing Cassel Oliver's future contributions to the fields of art history, theory, and museum studies.

CAMH will conduct a national search for a new curator in the coming months.