

MEADOWS MUSEUM ANNOUNCES 2013 MOSS/CHUMLEY ARTIST AWARD WINNER: CHRISTOPHER BLAY



DALLAS (SMU) (Dec. 18, 2013) – The Meadows Museum has announced that Christopher Blay has won the 2013 Moss/Chumley Artist Award. The award is given annually to an outstanding North Texas artist who has exhibited professionally for at least ten years and has a proven track record as a community advocate for the visual arts.

Blay received the award on December 12th during the Meadows Museum’s holiday party and preview for the exhibition *Sorolla and America*.

“Christopher Blay truly represents what the Moss/Chumley Award is all about,” said Mark Roglán, the Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum and Centennial Chair, Meadows School of the Arts, SMU. “We are excited to honor an exceptional North Texas artist who has done so much to give back to the arts community.”

This year’s Moss/Chumley Award winner is a multimedia artist who combines installation and photographic art. Blay’s recent solo exhibitions include *Machine Time*, an installation at McKinney Avenue Contemporary comprised of old hair-drying stations, clocks, an overhead projector and other photographic ephemera. *Faces Sequence for Alpha Station*, an excerpt from *Machine Time*, was displayed at the Meadows Museum during the award presentation and will be on view throughout December.

“I’m thrilled to join this list of esteemed artists,” said Blay. “I thank the Meadows Museum for honoring me with an award named after Frank Moss and Jim Chumley, who made so many contributions to the arts community in North Texas.”

The Moss/Chumley Award was founded to recognize not only talented artists living in North Texas, but also to acknowledge those who have proven track records as community advocates for the visual arts.

Blay has been called a “curator of people,” and his civic-mindedness is evident in the community-centered projects he creates. While working on an art project at the Fort Worth Public Library in 2006,

-MORE-

Blay began a community oral history project that included several DFW communities, and he received grants from the Arts Council of Northeast Tarrant County for his oral history projects on Haltom City and Keller.

Blay has served on the program committee for the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center and the steering committee for the Emergency Artists Support League (EASL) and he spearheaded a charity auction (VELVEASL!) to raise money for the EASL. He has donated art for several years to Artists against Aids as well as EASL, and he is a teaching artist at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth's Spring Break Art Camps.

"Each year, we get a bigger pool of talented artists who apply for the Moss/Chumley Award, but Christopher was an obvious choice," said Nicole Atzbach, Curator of the Meadows Museum. "He's a very talented artist who takes a dualistic approach: he's very socially minded in his art, and his community projects are centered around art, as well. His civic-mindedness makes him a natural fit for this award."

Blay received an Associate of Arts degree in Fine Art in 1998 from Tarrant County College and a Bachelor of Fine Art degree in 2003 from Texas Christian University. While still attending TCU he founded the Fort Worth photography collective Group f.8. Later, he focused on installation art while using a deconstructive approach to photography that kept him close to his love for the equipment and tactile processes of pre-digital photography.



The process of image making, an overarching theme in Blay's work, connects this artist's endeavors in installation and photographic art. This process can refer literally to the chemical process of photography, as in his "anti-graphs" created with expired Polaroid grid film.

In more metaphorical terms, Blay's image-making process refers to the manipulation of public personas: His *Artist as Dictator* images were self-portraits modeled after Charles G. Taylor, the Liberian dictator who was the subject of Blay's elaborate 2009 installation, *The Trial of Charles Taylor*, in which the artist recorded eight hours of transcripts from Taylor's trial at The Hague for his 1980 coup.

Blay's more recent works take to task the "cult of personality that develops around art and artists" with equal parts wit and humor. His 2011 sculpture series *Art Depreciation* presented such parodic juxtapositions as *Donald Judd Apatow*, *Samuel L. Jackson Pollock*, *L'il Wayne Thiebaud* and *Steely Dan Flavin*.

Blay is the curator of Art Corridor II, the gallery of Tarrant County College (Southeast Campus). He was awarded an NEA grant in 2013 for "Activating Vacancy" with BC Workshop as well as his previously mentioned grants from the Arts Council of Northeast Tarrant County. In 2011, he received the Tarrant County College Northeast Distinguished Alumni Award.

-MORE-

The jury for the 2013 Moss/Chumley award included Michael Corris, Professor and Chair, Division of Art, SMU; Joan Davidow, director emerita, Dallas Contemporary; Heyd Fontenot, artist and director of Central Trak, University of Texas at Dallas Artists Residency; George T. Lee, Jr., attorney at law and Meadows Museum Advisory Council member; Peter Simek, arts editor, D Magazine; Kevin Vogel, owner, Valley House Gallery, and Meadows Museum Advisory Council member; Nicole Atzbach, curator, Meadows Museum; Shelley DeMaria, curatorial assistant, Meadows Museum; Holly Hutzell, registrar, Meadows Museum.

Moss/Chumley Memorial Fund and Artist Award

The Moss/Chumley Memorial Fund was begun in 1989 by Frank Moss and the Meadows Museum as a tribute to Jim Chumley; Moss's name was added to the fund upon his death in 1991. Moss and Chumley were two Dallas art dealers who made outstanding contributions to the visual arts in North Texas during the 1980s. The pair operated the Nimbus Gallery on Routh Street from 1980 to 1987 and the Moss/Chumley Gallery at the Crescent Court from 1986 to 1989, where they showcased numerous new artists.

Established in 1995, the Moss/Chumley Artist Award is given in their memory. The award is open to artists working in any medium who live in one of the eleven North Texas counties: Collin, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Parker, Rockwall, Tarrant, and Wise.

Past recipients have included Isabelle duToit, Juliette McCullough, Catherine Chauvin, Kaleta Doolin, David Dreyer, Susan Kae Grant, David Hickman, Tracy Hicks, David McCullough, Bob Nunn, Sherry Owens, Ludwig Schwarz, Noah Simblist, Janet Tyson, Marie Van Arsdale, Mary Vernon, and Marilyn Waligore . Last year's winner was Stephen Laphthisophon.

###

Established in 1965 by oilman Algur H. Meadows, the Meadows Museum is located on the campus of Southern Methodist University in central Dallas. Its permanent collection of Spanish art is one of the finest in the world and contains works from the 10th through the 21st centuries by such masters as Velázquez, Goya, Miró and Picasso. Visit <http://www.meadowsmuseumdallas.org> for more information.

Media Contacts:

Laurey Peat
Laurey Peat + Associates
LPeat@lpapr.com
214-871-8787

Carrie Hunnicutt
Meadows Museum
chunnicutt@smu.edu
214-768-1584