



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

1280 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

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**HIGH MUSEUM OF ART TO PRESENT IMMERSIVE INSTALLATION
BY ICELANDIC ARTIST RAGNAR KJARTANSSON**

ATLANTA, Feb. 8, 2021 — This spring, the High Museum of Art will present “The Visitors” (March 6-May 9, 2021), the critically acclaimed video installation by Icelandic artist Ragnar Kjartansson, who is celebrated internationally for his work combining musical, theatrical and cinematic elements that have been known to evoke personal and collective meaning through an immersive and emotional experience of art.

Produced in 2012, “The Visitors” is a mesmerizing nine-channel sound and video recording featuring performers and musicians playing a composition by Kjartansson and Davíð Þór Jónsson with lyrics from artist Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir. Although playing together in unison, the performers each occupy separate rooms within a historic 43-room mansion on Rokeby Farm, an estate located in upstate New York. The unique visual and audio arrangement creates a layered portrait of the 200-year-old home and its inhabitants and poignantly expresses the experiences of love and loss, separation and reunion.

“On one hand, “The Visitors” resonates powerfully with the incessant screen-engagement that has become part and parcel of our year-long experience with the pandemic” said Rand Suffolk, the Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr., director of the High. “On the other, its scale, extraordinary eloquence, and humanity is uplifting; propelling those experiencing it far beyond the exhaustion and banality of our collective, isolation-defined moment.”

““The Visitors’ is one of the most affecting works of art produced in the past decade,” added Michael Rooks, the High’s Wieland Family curator of modern and contemporary art. “It builds intensity through the fugal repetition of its intertwining musical and poetic structures, which lead to an emotional release almost spiritual in nature. I can’t think of another artwork that speaks to the desire of love and the warmth of human tenderness—so long deferred during this time of pandemic—with such utter conviction.”

The installation is accompanied by “Postcards to Marguerite,” a multipart work that draws a literary parallel to the musical exchange between friends in “The Visitors.” Featuring 415 postcards the artist sent to Marguerite Steed Hoffman over a period of 14 months, the work marks a series of prosaic moments alongside significant events of Kjartansson’s life. The postcards provide a visual representation of the passage of time and add an autobiographical

layer of meaning to the exhibition through their record of everyday occurrences, including the weather, meals taken, and travel, as well as momentous events such as the birth of his daughter.

“Ragnar Kjartansson: The Visitors” is organized by the High and will be presented in the Cousins Family Special Exhibition Galleries on the second level of the Wieland Pavilion.

About Ragnar Kjartansson

Ragnar Kjartansson (born 1976, Reykjavík, Iceland) has been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Reykjavík Art Museum; the Barbican Centre, London; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Park, Washington, D.C.; the Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal; the Palais de Tokyo, Paris; the New Museum, New York; the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; the Frankfurter Kunstverein; and the BAWAG Contemporary, Vienna. Kjartansson participated in the 2013 Venice Biennale “The Encyclopedic Palace” and represented Iceland at the 2009 Venice Biennale. The artist is the recipient of the 2015 Artes Mundi Derek Williams Trust Purchase Award and Performa’s 2011 Malcolm McLaren Award. He lives and works in Reykjavík.

Exhibition Organization and Support

This exhibition is made possible by Premier Exhibition Series Sponsor Delta Air Lines, Inc.; Exhibition Series Sponsor Northside Hospital; Premier Exhibition Series Supporters Sarah and Jim Kennedy and wish foundation; Benefactor Exhibition Series Supporters Anne Cox Chambers Foundation and Robin and Hilton Howell; Ambassador Exhibition Series Supporters The Antinori Foundation, Corporate Environments, and Louise Sams and Jerome Grilhot; and Contributing Exhibition Series Supporters Farideh and Al Azadi, Sandra and Dan Baldwin, Lucinda W. Bunn, Marcia and John Donnell, Mrs. Fay S. Howell/The Howell Fund, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter Jones, The Arthur R. and Ruth D. Lautz Charitable Foundation, Joel Knox and Joan Marmo, Margot and Danny McCaul, The Ron and Lisa Brill Family Charitable Trust, The Fred and Rita Richman Fund, and Ms. Harriet H. Warren. Generous support is also provided by the Alfred and Adele Davis Exhibition Endowment Fund, Anne Cox Chambers Exhibition Fund, Barbara Stewart Exhibition Fund, Dorothy Smith Hopkins Exhibition Endowment Fund, Eleanor McDonald Storza Exhibition Endowment Fund, The Fay and Barrett Howell Exhibition Fund, Forward Arts Foundation Exhibition Endowment Fund, Helen S. Lanier Endowment Fund, Isobel Anne Fraser–Nancy Fraser Parker Exhibition Endowment Fund, John H. and Wilhelmina D. Harland Exhibition Endowment Fund, Katherine Murphy Riley Special Exhibition Endowment Fund, Margaretta Taylor Exhibition Fund, and the RJR Nabisco Exhibition Endowment Fund.

About the High Museum of Art

Located in the heart of Atlanta, the High Museum of Art connects with audiences from across the Southeast and around the world through its distinguished collection, dynamic schedule of special exhibitions and engaging community-focused programs. Housed within facilities designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects Richard Meier and Renzo Piano, the High features a collection of more than 18,000 works of art, including an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American fine and decorative arts; major holdings of photography and folk and self-taught work, especially that of artists from the American South; burgeoning collections of modern and

contemporary art, including paintings, sculpture, new media and design; a growing collection of African art, with work dating from prehistory through the present; and significant holdings of European paintings and works on paper. The High is dedicated to reflecting the diversity of its communities and offering a variety of exhibitions and educational programs that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit www.high.org.

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