

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

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BLANTON MUSEUM ACQUIRES INSTALLATION BY TEXAS ARTIST COLLECTIVE OKAY MOUNTAIN

*Acquisition of "Roadside Attractions" Celebrated With April 4 Lecture
and Mural Commission*



AUSTIN, TEXAS—March 17, 2015—The Blanton Museum of Art announces the acquisition of *Roadside Attractions*, a 2012 installation by Okay Mountain, an artist collective founded in Austin in 2006. On view at the Blanton beginning March 24, *Roadside Attractions* represents the first work of art that the museum has acquired by the group. To mark the occasion, the Blanton will host a lecture with all nine current members of Okay Mountain on Saturday, April 4 at 2 PM—the first time that the entire group has ever spoken together in Austin. Additionally, the Blanton has commissioned the collective to create an outdoor mural at 4th Street and Colorado in downtown Austin, as part of the mural program operated by Frank Public Art Wall.

Veronica Roberts, modern and contemporary curator at the Blanton, remarks, "I have long admired Okay Mountain's work. The collective has been a major force in Austin's artistic community and I am thrilled to be giving this smart, irreverent installation a permanent home at the Blanton."

Okay Mountain was formed in Austin in 2006 as an artist collective and alternative gallery space. Recognized by *The New York Times* for its "inventive construction, loving

attention to detail and keen-eyed connoisseurship," the group played a major role in the burgeoning visual arts scene in Austin in the first decade of the 2000s and continues to elevate the city's national cultural profile. Okay Mountain has produced a wide range of collaborative projects across a variety of media, including drawing, video, sound, performance, prints, zines, murals, and large-scale sculptural installations. Their artworks, informed by the unique perspective provided by a group dynamic, emphasize the artist's hand, and are always leavened by a sense of humor, whimsy, and larger-than-life Texan spirit.

Roadside Attractions is a smart, playful riff on the ubiquitous brochure stands found in hotel lobbies, tourist centers, and museum information desks across the United States. For the installation, the members of Okay Mountain designed 100 different rack cards that mimic and mock the campy tone and dense mishmash of styles often found in brochures. The cards—all of which are available for museum visitors to take—hawk activities that range from obscure and irreverent to the absurd: “Quiltin’ the Colorado!” (quilting and rafting tours); “Enjoy the Majesty of Mt. Rushmore without leaving the state!” (a half-scale version of the monument); “Visit the Second Largest Night Court Museum!” Other brochures possess a more biting humor that hint at the kind of ignorance and prejudice that can also be found in every state: for example, “The Vaguely African Museum” or “Crew Cut Clan” (haircuts designed like Klansmen hoods.)



Although the work is unapologetically humorous and at times even deliberately crude, it also captures a distinctly American spirit—a combination of brazen self-promotion, local pride, and a do-it-yourself attitude. Like other works by the group, *Roadside Attractions* plays on the conventions and absurdities of contemporary consumer culture.

For members of Okay Mountain, the sculpture also possesses a certain poignancy. When the group made the work, the members were scattered across the country (as they are now) and as a result, the only time they spent together was when they were on the road,

preparing to install or de-install a show. Traveling cross-country together, the hotels they stayed in became their de facto studio. Drawing upon pop graphics and styling, the spirit of the installation is smart, playful, and intelligent, just like the artists themselves.

Installation of Mural At Frank Public Art Wall, March 29-30

(Mural will be on view the entire month of April)

The public is invited to watch members of Okay Mountain as they create a mural at the public art wall at Frank (4th and Colorado). The installation will culminate with an opening reception at Frank on April 15 from 6-9PM.

**Lecture with Okay Mountain, Saturday, April 4, 2PM
Blanton Museum of Art**

Join all nine current members of Okay Mountain for a discussion of *Roadside Attractions* and the role that the collective played in the Austin art scene of the 2000s. Free with museum admission.



Funding for the lecture at the Blanton provided by the Carolyn Harris Hynson Centennial Endowment.

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About Okay Mountain

Okay Mountain is a nine-member artist collective. Formed in 2006 as an artist-run alternative gallery space, the group has exhibited their drawing, video, sound, and performance projects throughout the United States and in Mexico City, including at the Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston, Austin Museum of Art, McNay Art Museum, University of Tennessee Chattanooga, and the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum. Their work is included in the permanent collection of the Blanton Museum of Art, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, McNay Museum of Art, Orange County Museum of Art, and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego.

The nine current members, based in seven cities, are: Sterling Allen, Michael Sieben, Ryan Hennessee (Austin); Nathan Green (Dallas); Peat Duggins (Boston); Josh Rios (Chicago); Tim Brown (Kansas City); Carlos Rosales-Silva (New York); Justin Goldwater (Albuquerque). Most of the artists are graduates of the University of Texas at Austin; others are graduates of University of California Los Angeles, Rhode Island School of Design, and the University of Kansas. In addition to *Roadside Attractions*, the Blanton Museum collection includes three works by member Peat Duggins.

About the Blanton Museum of Art:

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art is one of the foremost university art museums in the country and holds the largest public collection in Central Texas. Recognized for its modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and baroque paintings, and encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings, the Blanton offers thought provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.

The museum is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10-5, Saturday from 11-5, and Sunday from 1-5. Thursdays are free admission days and every third Thursday the museum is open until 9. Admission Prices: Adults \$9, Kids 12 and under FREE, Seniors (65+) \$7, Youth/College Students (13-21) \$5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-

holders. For additional information call (512) 471-7324 or visit www.blantonmuseum.org.

Images:

Okay Mountain

Roadside Attractions, 2012

Birch plywood, masonite and printed brochures, ed. 1/3

48 in. x 48 in. x 22 in.

Purchase with funds provided by The Mark and Hilarie Moore Family Trust in memory of Timothy A. Fallon, 2014

Okay Mountain

Detail of brochure from *Roadside Attractions*, 2012