

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First Major Solo Exhibition in the U.S. in Over 20 Years of Renowned Artist Mona Hatoum Comes to Pulitzer Arts Foundation

Mona Hatoum: Terra Infirmis comprises more than thirty sculptures and installations, addressing universal questions of home, displacement, and political uncertainty.

Opens April 6, 2018



La grand broyeurse (Mouli-Julienne x 17), 1999

ST. LOUIS, MARCH 22, 2018—The Pulitzer Arts Foundation presents *Mona Hatoum: Terra Infirmis*, the first major U.S. exhibition of work by this important artist in over twenty years. Organized by the Menil Collection, in Houston, Texas, where it was on view earlier this year, *Mona Hatoum: Terra Infirmis* will include more than thirty sculptures and installations by the London-based Hatoum (b. 1952), installed throughout the Pulitzer galleries.

Mona Hatoum: Terra Infirmis will be on view from **April 6 through August 11, 2018**, at the Pulitzer, the exhibition's final venue. The exhibition was curated by Michelle White, Senior Curator at the Menil

Collection; the Pulitzer Arts Foundation presentation is organized by Curator Tamara H. Schenkenberg.

Pulitzer Director Cara Starke states, "Mona Hatoum is one of the most important international artists of our day, and we are delighted to collaborate with the Menil Collection to bring her work to St. Louis. With a thoughtful and poetic use of form and material, Hatoum offers nuanced perspectives on universal human questions. Probing ideas of home, borders, and political upheaval, her practice is particularly relevant to our contemporary moment of global migration, displacement, and political uncertainty."

Hatoum creates work that evokes the growing unease of a world that seems ever-expanding and as technologically networked as it is politically fractured by war and exile. Since the late 1980s, her sculptures and installations have been grounded in questions about how shifting geography and institutional structures can redefine our understanding of “home,” as she investigates place and the body through a minimalist language of form and a wide range of materials, from glass and steel to light and sand.

Mona Hatoum: Terra Infirma will present work from North American and European collections. Highlights include examples imbued with a sense of physical danger, challenging the idea of home as a place of rest and comfort. One such work is *Homebound* (1999), a room-size assemblage of household objects and furniture threaded together by a crackling wire of live electricity. Other works seem grounded in the Surrealist notion of the uncanny, as seen in *La grande broyeuse (Mouli-Julienne x 17)* (1999), a monumentally-scaled vegetable slicer, installed in the Pulitzer’s expansive main gallery, that transforms a familiar household object into a strange



Projection (velvet), 2013

and menacing creature through gigantic scale—seventeen times its original size. (The artist has stated that she wants her work to “create a situation where reality itself becomes a questionable point, where [viewers] have to reassess their assumptions and their relationship to things around them.”)

Another exhibition highlight is *Projection (velvet)* (2013), a work made of silk velvet that presents an alternative depiction of a world map. Based on the Gall-Peters Projection, which represents each land mass in relative proportion to each

other while also accounting for the contours of the earth, Hatoum’s map provokes a sense of instability by presenting the world in an unfamiliar way.

Other works in the exhibition include *Silence* (1994), an infant’s crib constructed of thin glass laboratory tubes; *So much I want to say* (1983), a video of the artist’s face as she struggles to fend off male hands gagging her; and *Impenetrable* (2009), a suspended cube-like form made of hundreds of strands of hanging barbed wire rods.

Mona Hatoum: Terra Infirma will be accompanied by a scholarly catalogue published by the Menil Collection and distributed by Yale University Press. This copiously illustrated presentation of the artist’s oeuvre offers critical and art historical essays by Anna Chave, Adania Shibli, Rebecca Solnit, and Michelle White. The exhibition catalogue will be available for sale at the Pulitzer.

At the Menil Collection, *Mona Hatoum: Terra Infirma* was realized through the generous support of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; National Endowment for the Arts; the Levant Foundation; the Brown Foundation, Inc. / Herman L. Stude; Leslie and Brad Bucher; Bettie Cartwright; Day for Night; Nijad and Zeina Fares; Scott and Judy Nyquist; Clare Casademont and

Michael Metz; Adelaide de Menil; Franci Neely; Leslie and Shannon Sasser; Anne Schlumberger; and the City of Houston.

Mona Hatoum

Born in Beirut to a Palestinian family, Hatoum studied at the Byam Shaw and the Slade Schools of Art in London, where she settled after having been stranded because of the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975 while on a short visit to the city. She has had major exhibitions at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Tate Modern, London; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, among other institutions. Hatoum was nominated for the 1995 Turner Prize and has been included in important group exhibitions such as Documenta XI in 2002, and the 1995 and 2005 Venice Biennales. In 2011, Hatoum was awarded the Joan Miró Prize by Fundacio Joan Miró.



Grater Divide, 2002

Opening Weekend Events

Opening Reception
Friday, April 6; 6-9 pm

Artist Talk
Saturday, April 7; 2 pm

Public Programs

The exhibition will be accompanied by a variety of public programs, including film screenings, performances, live music, community projects,

poetry readings, and meditation sessions. Collaborators include FarFetched, Dail Chambers, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Just Vision, the Adalah Justice Project, St. Louis Palestine Solidarity Committee, and The Texas Room, among others.

About the Pulitzer Arts Foundation

The Pulitzer Arts Foundation believes in the power of direct experiences with art. The museum presents historic and contemporary art in dynamic interplay with its celebrated Tadao Ando building, offering unexpected experiences and inspiring new perspectives. Valuing close looking and civic engagement, the Pulitzer is a place for contemplation and exchange that brings art and people together.

Located in the Grand Center Arts District in St. Louis, Missouri, the Pulitzer is free and open to the public between 10am–5pm on Wednesday through Saturday, with evening hours until 8pm on Friday. For more information, visit pulitzerarts.org or call 314-754-1850.

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IMAGE CAPTIONS

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Mona Hatoum, *La grand broyeuse (Mouli-Julienne x 17)*, 1999, mild steel, main sculpture 135 x 226 ½ x 103 ½ inches (343 x 575 x 263 cm), each disc 2 x 67 x 67 inches (5 x 170 x 170 cm). Installed at Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, Antwerpen (MUHKA), Antwerp, 2000. CGAC Collection, Santiago de Compostela. © Mona Hatoum. Image courtesy of MUHKA, Antwerp. Photo: Wim van Nueten

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Mona Hatoum, *Projection (velvet)*, 2013. Velvet and mild steel, 38 ¼ x 63 ¾ inches (97 x 162 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Alexander and Bonin, New York. © Mona Hatoum. Image courtesy of Kunstmuseum St. Gallen. Photo: Stefan Rohner

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Mona Hatoum, *Grater Divide*, 2002, mild steel, 80 inches x variable width and depth (204 cm x variable width and depth). Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Museum purchase with funds donated by the Linde Family Foundation. © Mona Hatoum. Image courtesy of White Cube. Photo: Iain Dickens