

# cincinnati art museum

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**\*Images Available Upon Request**

## **Cincinnati Art Museum presents *Ragnar Kjartansson:* *The Visitors and Scenes from Western Culture* March 30–June 17, 2018**

**CINCINNATI**— Internationally acclaimed visual artist and musician Ragnar Kjartansson will be featured at the Cincinnati Art Museum March 30–June 17, 2018. His landmark video installation *The Visitors* and selections from his new work *Scenes from Western Culture* will bring visitors into Kjartansson’s visual and aural world.

*The Visitors* (2012), a masterful multi-channel video experience, immerses viewers in a performance made in the rooms of a historic manor. Nine large-scale video screens weave together the musicians positioned in separate areas throughout a nearly 200-year-old manor in the Hudson Valley. The musicians, all friends of Kjartansson, play a single melody over and over, repeating lyrics from an Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir poem: “Once again I fall into my feminine ways.”

Though physically separated, the musicians are united through song over the course of 64 minutes as their solitary refrains slowly weave together. At the end of the production, each musician leaves her or his post and convenes outside the house, continuing to sing and play.

*Scenes from Western Culture* (2015) is a body of new work that tells diverse and mysterious tales through long-duration video. Six videos that feature various vignettes of what Kjartansson describes as “ideal images of Western life” were selected for this exhibition. Both a celebration and a critique of the permeation of Western cultural ideals, the scenes unfold like moving paintings.

Cameron Kitchin, Cincinnati Art Museum’s Louis and Louise Dieterle Nippert Director, launched the special feature at the museum. “Kjartansson’s deeply affecting, immersive works *The Visitors* and *Scenes from Western Culture* carry forward traditional narrative with contemporary video and musical performance,” says Kitchin. “The result is a 21<sup>st</sup> century artist combining the personal with the universal to tell stories by fascinating and emotional new means.”

Born in 1976, Kjartansson resides and works in Reykjavik, Iceland. In 2009, he represented Iceland at the prestigious Venice Biennale. Known for his durational performance art, notably with the band The National with Cincinnati roots, Kjartansson’s works have been presented at institutions on several continents.

Kristín Anna Valtýsdóttir, one of the musicians featured in *The Visitors*, will be performing live works from her new solo album at the museum April 28 and 29 as part of MusicNOW’s Homecoming event. Tickets are available at <https://ntlhomecoming.com/tickets/>.

The Cincinnati Art Museum’s presentation of Ragnar Kjartansson is in collaboration with the artist’s studio and with the assistance of Luhning Augustine and i8 Gallery Reykjavik. *The Visitors* is a generous loan from the Gund Gallery at Kenyon College, ICA Boston and The Guggenheim.

This exhibition will be on view in the Schiff Gallery and Ambulatory (galleries 234 and 222). It is generously supported by the Marnick Foundation. Admission is free. Photography is permitted and encouraged. On social media, use #RagnarKjartansson and #TheVisitors.

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## **About the Cincinnati Art Museum**

The Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the generosity of individuals and businesses that give annually to Artswave. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as our members.

Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from The Rosenthal Family Foundation. Special exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free. The museum is open Tuesday–Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and Thursday, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

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