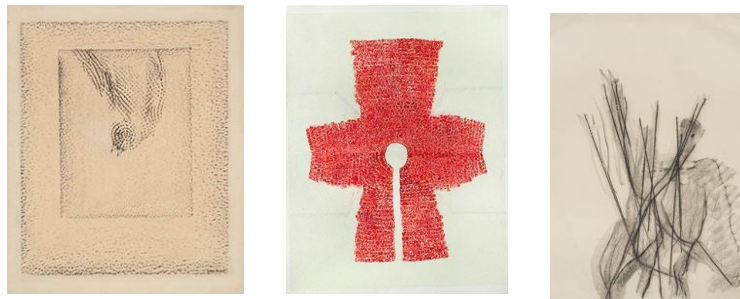


***APPARITIONS:  
FROTTAGES & RUBBINGS FROM 1860 TO NOW***

Organized by the Menil Collection in Houston  
and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles

**First of its kind, exhibition opens September 11 at the Menil – on view  
through January 3, 2016**

"Appearances become apparitions." - Allegra Pesenti, curator at large,  
Menil Drawing Institute



**HOUSTON, TX, August, 27, 2015** — The first museum exhibition to focus on one of the world's oldest known image-making techniques, *Apparitions: Frottages and Rubbings from 1860 to Now* presents some 100 works on paper by 50 international artists. Organized by the Menil Collection in Houston and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, the exhibition explores the historical roots and expansive modern and contemporary practice of frottage.

Curated by Allegra Pesenti, curator at large of the Menil Drawing Institute, *Apparitions* opens in Houston on September 11 and will be on view through January 3, 2016.

Born out of the impulse to touch, feel, and draw, frottage (from the French verb *frotter* meaning "to rub") has long played a role in archeological, historical, and scientific endeavors, represented in the exhibition by a remarkable group of 19th century British tomb rubbings. Frottage and rubbing are relatively simple drawing techniques that involve the rendering of an image by placing a sheet of paper over an object or dimensional surface and running a marking agent such as chalk or charcoal over it.

Max Ernst's incorporation of frottage into his practice in the 1920's was one of the fundamental contributions to surrealist drawing, and indeed to the history of modern art. At a moment when artists were rejecting mastery and skill as stand-ins for a tradition, Ernst used frottage as a way to relinquish control of the hand and to probe the unconscious. The resulting compositions of this automatic drawing method were unexpected, with latent and elusive qualities and characteristics rising to the surface, like ghosts. The French poet and painter Henri Michaux coined the term "apparitions" for his frottages, alluding to presences that appeared on paper by chance as much as by choice. The technique of frottage—basic but sensuous in its tactility and intimacy—yields results that combine properties of drawing, printmaking, and sculpture, and it remains an experimental practice in studios today.

"Rubbings belong to the indefinable status of 'in between,' and embody the transformation that occurs in the transfer from surface to surface," said exhibition curator Allegra Pesenti. "A metamorphosis of the rubbed object may arise in that process, as well as a revelation of previously unrecognized traces and textures. Appearances become apparitions."

Along with significant loans from national and international institutions, the exhibition draws from the strengths of the Menil Collection, particularly within the realm of surrealism, and of the Grunwald and Hammer Museum collections of modern and contemporary works on paper. It includes examples of frottage and rubbing by artists ranging from Max Ernst and the Czech surrealists Jindřich Štýrský and Toyen to postwar figures such as Alighiero Boetti and Roy Lichtenstein and several generations of contemporary artists. The latter include Anna Barriball, Jennifer Bornstein, Morgan Fisher, Simryn Gill, Matt Mullican, Ruben Ochoa, Gabriel Orozco, and Jack Whitten. The eclectic yet focused selection also sheds light on artists who are as yet little known outside their countries of origin, such as Geta Brătescu, Eva Kmentová, and Adriena Šimotová.

Said the MDI's Chief Curator, David Breslin: "We are pleased to collaborate with the

Hammer in presenting the first exhibition dedicated to this fascinating mode of working that broadens and complicates our understanding of what drawing is and can be. Using the Menil's holdings of Max Ernst as a cornerstone of the exhibition, Allegra has beautifully explored the continuing vitality of frottage as well as its underexplored histories."

Given the technique underlying their creation, the seductive works in *Apparitions* connect us directly to the tactile. Though we cannot touch the images on display, we are profoundly moved by the history and the physicality that lie at the heart of their making.

*This exhibition is generously supported by Clare Casademont and Michael Metz, John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation, Nina and Michael Zilkha, Frost Bank, UBS Wealth Management/UBS Private Wealth Management, Janet and Paul Hobby, David and Anne Kirkland, Marilyn Oshman, Michael and Diane Cannon, Scott and Judy Nyquist, and the City of Houston.*

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### **Public Programs**

#### ***Apparitions and Curatorial Adventures***

**Monday, September 14, 7:30 p.m.**

Exhibition curator Allegra Pesenti discusses the realization of *Apparitions* and explores the diverse works, sites, and cultures that she encountered during its preliminary stages.

#### ***What's The Rub***

**Saturday, November 7, 8:00 p.m.**

In conjunction with the exhibition, composer and percussionist Glenn Kotche, well known as the drummer of Wilco, presents this solo performance, which includes new work commissioned for this event. Seating is limited.

*All public programs are free and open to the public.*

## ARTIST LIST

- Eileen Agar (b. Argentina,  
active United Kingdom, 1899–1991)
- Anna Barriball (United Kingdom, b. 1972)
- Willi Baumeister (Germany, 1889–1955)
- Alighiero Boetti (Italy, 1940–1994)
- Jennifer Bornstein (United States, b. 1970)
- Louise Bourgeois (b. France,  
active United States, 1911–2010)
- Geta Brătescu (Romania, b. 1926)
- André Breton (France, 1896–1966)
- Heidi Bucher (Switzerland, 1926–1993)
- Enrico David (b. Italy 1966,  
active Italy and United Kingdom)
- Sari Dienes (b. Hungary, active United States,  
1898–1992)
- Dominick Di Meo (United States, b. 1927)
- Jim Dine (United States, b. 1935)
- Jane Dixon (United Kingdom, b. 1963)
- Jean Dubuffet (France, 1901–1985)
- Jimmie Durham (b. United States 1940, active  
Germany, Mexico, Switzerland, and  
United States,)
- Max Ernst (b. Germany, active France,  
Germany, and United States, 1891–1976)
- Sam Falls (United States, b. 1984)
- Julia Fish (United States, b. 1950)
- Morgan Fisher (United States, b. 1942)
- Cyprien Gaillard (France, b. 1980)
- Simryn Gill (b. Singapore 1959, active  
Australia and Malaysia)
- Mona Hatoum (b. Lebanon 1952, active  
Germany and United Kingdom)
- Tim Hawkinson (United States, b. 1960)
- Andrea Heuber (Germany, 18th century)
- Robert Indiana (United States, b. 1928)
- Eva Kmentová (Czechoslovakia [now  
Czech Republic], 1928–1980)
- Ellen Lanyon (United States, 1926–2013)
- Roy Lichtenstein (United States, 1923–1997)
- Glenn Ligon (United States, b. 1960)
- Roberto Matta (b. Chile, active France, Italy,  
and United States, 1911–2002)
- Henri Michaux (b. Belgium, active France,  
1899–1984)
- Helen Mirra (United States, b. 1970)
- Robert Morris (United States, b. 1931)
- Matt Mullican (United States, b. 1951)
- Scott Myles (United Kingdom, b. 1975)  
and Gavin Morrison (United Kingdom,  
b. 1973)
- Ruben Ochoa (United States, b. 1974)
- Gabriel Orozco (b. Mexico 1962, active  
France, Mexico, and United States)
- Robert Overby (United States, 1935–1993)
- Giuseppe Penone (Italy, b. 1947)
- Roland Penrose (United Kingdom,  
1900–1984)
- Adriena Šimotová (Czech Republic [former  
Czechoslovakia], 1926–2014)
- Steven Steinman (United States, b. 1951)
- Michelle Stuart (United States, b. 1933)
- Jindřich Štyrský (Czechoslovakia [now Czech  
Republic], 1899–1942)
- Do Ho Suh (b. South Korea 1962, active  
South Korea, United Kingdom, and  
United States)
- Alina Szapocznikow (b. Poland, active France  
and Poland, 1926–1973)
- Toyen (b. Czechoslovakia [now  
Czech Republic], active Czechoslovakia  
and France, 1902–1980)
- Jack Whitten (United States, b. 1939)
- Zarina (b. India 1937, active United States)

## **About the Menil Collection**

A legacy of the late philanthropists John and Dominique de Menil, the Menil Collection opened in 1987. The Menil Collection's main museum building anchors the 30-acre campus, which includes the Cy Twombly Gallery, a site-specific Dan Flavin installation, and outdoor sculpture. Presenting regular rotations of artworks from the growing permanent collection, the Menil also organizes special exhibitions and programs throughout the year, publishes scholarly books, and conducts research into the conservation of modern and contemporary art. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11am to 7pm, and charges no admission fee.

Images (L to R):

Max Ernst, *Untitled (The Diver [Le plongeur])*, 1925. Graphite frottage on paper, 12 1/4 x 10 inches (31.1 x 25.4 cm). The Menil Collection, Houston, Gift of Alexander Iolas. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

Do Ho Suh, *Rubbing/Loving Project: Metal Jacket*, 2014. Colored pencil frottage with smudging on mulberry paper, 85 1/4 x 68 3/8 inches (216.5 x 173.5 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York and Hong Kong. © Do Ho Suh

Henri Michaux, *Untitled*, 1944. Chalk and chalk frottage on paper, 14 1/8 x 9 5/8 inches (35.9 x 24.4 cm). UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, Hammer Museum, Purchased with funds provided by the Helga K. and Walter Oppenheimer Acquisition Fund. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

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