



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**21C MUSEUM HOTELS TO OPEN NEW LOCATION IN NASHVILLE WITH INAUGURAL EXHIBITION
TRUTH OR DARE: A REALITY SHOW, WHICH EXPLORES INTERSECTIONS OF
FACT AND FICTION, PRESENCE AND ABSENCE**

*One of the Largest Contemporary Art Museums in the U.S. and the Only Dedicated to Art of the 21st Century,
The Multi-Venue Museum is Pioneering a New Model for Contemporary Art Institutions*

Nashville, TN (April 4, 2017) – 21c Museum Hotels has announced it will open its newest property, 21c Nashville, this May in the heart of downtown, near the city’s 5th Avenue of the Arts, Ryman Auditorium, and Printer’s Alley. The Museum Hotel will feature 10,500 square feet of exhibition galleries, open to the public 24 hours a day, seven days per week. 21c Nashville will open with the inaugural exhibition *Truth or Dare: A Reality Show*, which will include works by Leo Villareal, Shahzia Sikander, Serkan Özkaya, and Richard Mosse, among others, and site-specific commissions including by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer and Sebastiaan Bremer. The architectural firm Deborah Berke Partners has reimagined the historic Gray & Dudley Building, a former wholesale hardware company, for 21c Nashville, preserving the building’s historic elements, while creating a versatile platform for exhibiting contemporary art.

21c Museum, a multi-venue museum with locations in seven cities, is one of the largest contemporary art museums in the U.S., and North America’s only collecting museum dedicated solely to art of the 21st century. It was founded in 2006 by Steve Wilson and Laura Lee Brown, philanthropists, preservationists, and contemporary art collectors, who were inspired by the idea that art can spur urban revitalization and catalyze civic connection. Envisioning a new way to expand access to contemporary art in urban centers, they created 21c Museum Hotel, seamlessly integrating a fully functioning contemporary art museum within the fabric of a hotel, overturning the hierarchies of a traditional art museum.

The inaugural Nashville exhibition, *Truth or Dare: A Reality Show*, highlights 21c’s commitment to using art as a lens through which to view important current events and issues, exploring the complicated nature of truth today. The exhibition will include painting, sculpture, photography, video, digital animation, and installations by more than 24 artists that layer fiction with fact, narrating both the complexity and the necessity for seeking and speaking the truth. Through works that simulate games, maps, sleights of the eye and hand, and draw on illusion, the exhibition playfully and thoughtfully navigates the slippery terrain between fantasy and reality.

“At 21c, presenting thought-provoking contemporary art is integral to our mission and integrated throughout our spaces, allowing for interactions that wouldn’t be possible in a traditional museum setting,” said Chief Curator and Museum Director Alice Gray Stites. “As the very nature of truth is being called into question right now, we wanted to present visitors with an exhibition that explores the complex nature of fact in a way that is both serious and playful. These works encourage viewers to look more closely, engage, and question what they are being confronted with, which is so essential right now.”

The centerpiece of the exhibition will be Turkish artist Serkan Özkaya's *An Attempt at Exhausting a Space in Nashville*, an immersive installation that will be projected throughout the lobby. The work will give visitors the illusion that the walls of the building have dissolved, creating a seamless transition between interior and exterior, and revealing, in real time, views of North Second Street, of the newly activated pedestrian alleyway on the east side of the building, and of interior spaces otherwise hidden from view. Özkaya, whose *David (Inspired by Michelangelo)*—a larger-than-life golden statue—is installed at 21c Louisville, has a longstanding interest in exploring boundaries, appropriation, and reproduction, and this work continues his use of illusion to dissolve fixed barriers.

Truth or Dare, which will be installed throughout the exhibition space on the first and second floors, and in the double-height atrium on the lower level, will be drawn from 21c's diverse collection, and will include new and recently acquired works. Among the exhibition highlights will be Shahzia Sikander's mesmerizing, color-saturated video animation, *Disruption as Rapture*, Oliver Laric's polyurethane casts of Reformation-era altarpieces, a ping-pong table altered with a mirror for a game of one-on-one by Trong Gia Ngyuen, Leandro Erlich's visions of clouds once seen in the sky above Venice, and Charles Matton's hologram figure projected in a miniature library, all of which offer prescient critiques of how and where we search for truth.

The vulnerability of the contemporary human condition will be made visible in works such as Jane Hammond's collage map of northern Europe *All Souls*, in which geographical boundaries are obscured by the layers of paper, paint, and delicate butterflies; in Dinh Q Lê's photographic homage to immigrants, *Go Cong Dong Beach*; and in Richard Mosse's heat-map photograph documenting the refugee crisis in Europe, which he creates using equipment originally developed as a military weapon. Facing continuing global strife and rapid changes in technology, politics, and the economy, the artists featured in *Truth or Dare* speak truth to power through unconventional, often playful juxtapositions of imagery and materials: Addie Wagenknecht adapts the design for a 3D-printed handgun into a vase; Pedro Reyes's presents his wooden *Lady Liberty (As a Trojan Horse)*, which resembles an oversize toy replica of the iconic public sculpture, installed on an army tank-base, carrying the torch of freedom into war; and Federico Solmi creates his cartoon-like animations by transforming his paintings using video-game technology, presenting searing parodies of politicians and the hunger games they play.

Deborah Berke Partners, which has been the Design Architect for all 21c locations to date, has reimagined the Gray & Dudley Building to celebrate the culture of the city and its history as a place for makers, musicians, and artists. The firm has preserved the remaining historic elements of the 1900s Chicago Style building—including the column capitals, cast iron and wood timber columns, and large warehouse windows—while updating the interior to create an open and contemporary space.

Upcoming Exhibitions at 21c Museum Hotels

This May a major exhibition will open at 21c Oklahoma City and a new site-specific work will be installed at 21c Bentonville in June.

Beginning May 26, 21c Oklahoma City will present *OFF-SPRING: New Generations*, an exhibition that explores the role of ritual—religious, cultural, and domestic—in the development of both personal and group identity, childhood, family, history, and gender politics through more than 75 works in a range of media including sculpture, painting, photography, and video. Whether within the fantasy of childhood play or the familiarity of adult life, the new/old narratives reflect a spectrum of perspectives on the contemporary construction of self and society. On view through March 30, 2018, the exhibition includes work by Guy Ben-Ner, Gerhard Demetz, Angela Ellsworth, Frances Goodman, Gottfried Helnwein, Deana Lawson, Loretta Lux, Hans Op de Beeck, Will Ryman, and Carrie Mae Weems, among others.

This June, a site-specific, immersive installation, *Buzzkill*, will transform the Hive restaurant at 21c Bentonville, turning the restaurant into a work of art itself. Artist Johnston Foster, who creates sculptures using repurposed materials such as plastic safety cones, construction siding, and other found detritus, will fill the Hive's dining and lounge spaces with a larger than life, glowing honeycomb, kudzu vines, and a swarm of bees. The work narrates the adaptation of animal and plant species to rapidly changing environmental conditions, and references the folklore and fauna of Northwest Arkansas.

About 21c Museum Hotel Nashville

21c Museum Hotel Nashville, opening May 2017, is a combination contemporary art museum, boutique hotel, and chef-driven restaurant. Building on its mission of expanding public access to contemporary art and supporting the revitalization of American downtowns, 21c is rehabilitating the historic Gray & Dudley Building in Downtown Nashville near Printer's Alley. The 124-room property features a 10,500 square foot contemporary art museum open to the public free of charge seven days a week and featuring group and solo exhibitions, site-specific installations, and a full roster of cultural programming; a locally grounded restaurant and bar led by Chef Levon Wallace; a spa; and seven rooftop terrace suites, including the spacious 21c suite, with up-close views of the Cumberland River and surrounding historic district.

About 21c Museum Hotels

21c creates innovative cultural centers for viewing thought provoking contemporary art from all over the world. Exhibitions are installed in dedicated, publicly accessible space and artworks and site-specific commissions appear in elevators, public restrooms, courtyards, hallways, guest rooms, restaurants, on the roof, and in the surrounding alleys and streetscapes, inviting visitors to engage with art in unexpected ways. 21c Museum has a staff of 18 led by Chief Curator and Museum Director Alice Gray Stites. Stites joined 21c in 2011, curating exhibitions and overseeing cultural programming for each of 21c's seven venues. Before joining 21c, Stites was Director of artwithoutwalls, Adjunct Curator for the Speed Art Museum, and served in various editorial roles for *Abbeville Press*, *Contemporanea*, and *Art & Auction*. Founded in 2006, 21c Museum Hotels are located in Louisville, Kentucky; Cincinnati, Ohio; Bentonville, Arkansas; Durham, North Carolina; Lexington, Kentucky; and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Projects are under development in Kansas City, Missouri and Miami, Florida.

###

For press information contact:

Emily Tucker
21c Museum Hotels
502-882-6234
etucker@21chotels.com

Sarah Palay/Abby Margulies
Resnicow + Associates
212-671-5163 / 614-827-5810
spalay@resnicow.com / amargulies@resnicow.com