

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UH MITCHELL CENTER ANNOUNCES NEW INNOVATION GRANTS PROGRAM

HOUSTON, Oct. 12, 2012 – The University of Houston Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts recently launched a new program to fund innovative projects driven by UH School of Art, Blaffer Art Museum, Creative Writing Program, Moores School of Music, and School of Theatre and Dance.

In an effort to spur imaginative, transformational programming and underscore the role of UH as a generator of cutting edge artistic production, the Innovation Grants Program was launched in conjunction with the university's UH Arts initiative, and funded in part by a major three-year grant from Houston Endowment, Inc.

"The Innovation Grants Program provides a wonderful new source of support for the creative activities of our very talented faculty," says John Roberts, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. "We see this program as one that will ensure the growth and flowering of UH Arts to benefit the campus and the city of Houston."

Proposals are accepted annually from the five Mitchell Center member units, and awards are selected by a peer review panel appointed by Dean Roberts.

The Mitchell Center is pleased to announce the first round of Innovation Grants for the 2012-13 academic year:

- **The Graphic Novel Workshop** - The workshop is taught by internationally renowned novelist Mat Johnson and engages students in the Creative Writing Program and School of Art in the collaborative, interdisciplinary form of the graphic novel. The course challenges traditional methods of storytelling and transforms a standard form of popular culture into a literary art. Several professional artists will visit the class throughout the semester, which will culminate in a final public showing of the students' work.
- **Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art** - This exhibition is scheduled for the Blaffer Art Museum in fall 2013 and includes a series of performance projects and participatory public events. Feast defines an important new category of contemporary artistic practice – the artist-orchestrated meal. Innovation Grant funds will support the development of public programming for the exhibition.
- **Materiality** - This yearlong lecture series interrogates material practice in the arts. Co-hosted by the School of Art and Blaffer Art Museum, the series explores how the material "stuff" of art practice intersects with making and meaning. Conservators, curators, anthropologists and artists will debate the topic in a groundbreaking interdisciplinary series.

"The first round of Innovation Grants exemplifies the thrilling potential of the arts at University of Houston," says Karen Farber, director of the Mitchell Center. "Each of these projects represents a bold new step for its home department, and often impacts multiple audiences at once. UH programs are collaborating with one another more than ever, and we at the Mitchell Center are delighted to be a part of this transformation on campus."

About the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts

The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts is dedicated to groundbreaking, transformative collaborations across the performing, visual, and literary arts. Based at the University of Houston, the Mitchell Center commissions and produces new works, presents public performances and exhibitions, offers curriculum and scholarships, and hosts residencies with renowned visiting artists from throughout the world. The center forms an alliance among five departments at UH: the School of Art, Moores School of Music, School of Theatre and Dance, Creative Writing Program, and Blaffer Art Museum.