

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**HIGH MUSEUM OF ART COMMISSIONS
SECOND INTERACTIVE PIAZZA INSTALLATION BY JAIME HAYON**

*Site-specific work will be the fourth in a series
to activate the High's outdoor piazza*

ATLANTA, Feb. 23, 2017 – This summer, the [High Museum of Art](#) will unveil “Merry Go Zoo,” the second interactive installation by Spanish designer Jaime Hayon on The Woodruff Arts Center’s Carroll Slater Sifly Piazza. On view June 24 through Nov. 26, 2017, “Merry Go Zoo” continues a multiyear initiative to animate the High’s outdoor space with site-specific commissions that engage visitors of all ages in participatory art experiences.

Inspired to create a playful, 21st-century version of an outdoor public sculpture, Hayon has designed four large-scale, vibrantly colored, kinetic structures for “Merry Go Zoo.” Each of the structures features a round metal-and-wood base topped by an animal-shaped polyurethane sculpture. Visitors will be able to interact with the structures either by spinning on the base or by rotating the sculpture. “Merry Go Zoo” will transform the piazza into a playground and summer refuge that offers a welcoming atmosphere for socializing and recreation. The installation will also become the stage for performances, art-making activities and special events co-organized with local partner institutions.



Rendering of “Merry Go Zoo” on the Carroll Slater Sifly Piazza. ©HayonStudio

“The incredibly talented Jaime Hayon has envisioned a dynamic, engaging and joyful setting that extends the Museum’s reach outdoors and invites visitors to experience art in an interactive way,” said Sarah Schleuning, the High’s decorative arts and design curator.

“Jaime’s vision has once again re-imagined our piazza as a destination for the community to come together and take part in the artist’s creation,” said Virginia Shearer, Eleanor McDonald Storza director of education at the High. “The installation serves as a welcome mat for our family visitors and as inspiration to linger and play on the piazza.”

This summer’s project builds on the success of the three previous piazza commissions: Hayon’s 2016 [“Tiovivo”](#) (on view through March 5, 2017) and 2014–2015’s [“Mi Casa, Your Casa”](#) and [“Los Trompos”](#) ([“The Spinning Tops”](#)), both created by Mexican designers Héctor Esrawe and Ignacio Cadena. “Merry Go Zoo” is the third piazza installation funded by the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation through a grant to The Woodruff Arts Center.

Concurrent with “Merry Go Zoo,” the High will present “Technicolor,” an immersive installation in the Museum’s Anne Cox Chambers Wing featuring dramatic new works by Hayon that the High has commissioned to grow its significant 21st century design collection. Six large-scale textiles, inspired by designs Hayon created for last summer’s “Tiovivo,” will hang from the ceiling. Hayon worked with the renowned Tilburg Textile Museum’s TextielLab in the Netherlands to weave the vibrant works using a mix of traditional fibers and non-traditional materials, such as rubber. Pedestals on the floor will display quirky, stacked ceramics with colorful, expressive designs Hayon hand-painted with colored glazes. All of these works showcase Hayon’s new explorations in color and technique.

To kick off “Merry Go Zoo” and “Technicolor,” the High will present a Summer Celebration on the evening of Friday, June 23, 2017, featuring music, performances, talks and tours. Following the opening, the High will offer special programming related to “Merry Go Zoo” each month during its First Friday events. This programming will include artistic pairings, live music and other performances in collaboration with artists and performers across the Atlanta arts spectrum, from colleagues at the other Woodruff Arts Center partners (Alliance Theatre and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra) to Atlanta arts groups.

Midtown Alliance Partnership

Building on last summer’s successful “Tiovivo” project, the High will again partner with Midtown Alliance to bring the piazza installation from The Woodruff Arts Center campus to the streets of Midtown. To complement “Merry Go Zoo,” Hayon will create an interactive “Shadowmaker” sculpture, which will be placed at the Arts Center MARTA Station. The sculpture features a bench base, topped with a hooded figure holding an umbrella-like shade. Passersby may relax on the bench as they enjoy a rest from the hot summer sun.

About the High’s Piazza Activation Initiative

Curated by Sarah Schleuning, curator of decorative arts and design, and Virginia Shearer, the Eleanor McDonald Storza director of education, the High’s piazza activation initiative launched in 2014 to explore how engaging with art and design can extend beyond the museum’s walls. Varied programs, art-making activities and other interactive features enliven these dynamic outdoor installations.

The High commissioned Esrawe and Cadena to design the first two installations for the project, [“Mi Casa, Your Casa”](#) and [“Los Trompos” \(“The Spinning Tops”\)](#), followed by Hayon’s [“Tiovivo.”](#) For each of these installations, the High worked with local arts organizations and Woodruff Arts Center partners to present live performances and art-making activities themed around the structures. The piazza projects have so far been enjoyed by a total of nearly 450,000 visitors.

The High’s piazza activation initiative is sponsored by a grant from the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation, which is part of the family of foundations that also includes the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation. The Lettie Pate Evans Foundation is an independent private foundation that invests primarily in education, arts and culture.

About Jaime Hayon

Artist-designer Jaime Hayon was born in Madrid in 1974. His artistic vision was first fully exposed in the “Mediterranean Digital Baroque” (London, 2003) and “Mon Cirque” (2006)

installations. Those exhibitions put Hayon at the forefront of a new wave that blurred the lines between art, decoration and design and a renaissance in finely crafted, intricate objects within the context of contemporary design culture. Hayon further defined his vision in subsequent solo exhibitions and shows at major galleries and art fairs around the globe. Previous projects include the large, functional “Tournament” chessboard installed during London’s Design Week 2009 (Trafalgar Square) and the “Funtastico” solo exhibition at the Groninger Museum (the Netherlands, 2013). In 2015, the High acquired Hayon’s “Green Chicken” rocking chair (2008) for its decorative arts and design collection.

Hayon currently resides in Valencia, Spain, with offices in Barcelona and Treviso, Italy. His work has appeared in the most prestigious art and design publications worldwide, and he has won numerous awards, including multiple Elle Deco International Design awards. Wallpaper Magazine included Hayon in its “Design’s Top 100 Power List” and recognized him as one of the most influential creators of the last decade. TIME magazine also lauded him as a “visionary” and one of the “most creative icons.”

Exhibition Organization and Support

“Merry Go Zoo” is organized by the High Museum of Art, Atlanta. Support has been generously provided by the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation.

About High Museum of Art

The High is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 15,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American art; a substantial collection of historical and contemporary decorative arts and design; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography, folk and self-taught art, and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists. Through its education department, the High offers programs and experiences that engage visitors with the world of art, the lives of artists and the creative process. For more information about the High, visit high.org.

About The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center in Atlanta is one of the largest arts centers in the world, home to the Tony Award–winning Alliance Theatre, the Grammy Award–winning Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) and the High Museum of Art, the leading art museum in the Southeast. One of the only arts venues in the United States to offer both visual and performing arts on a single campus, The Woodruff produces outstanding theater, music and exhibitions for nearly one million patrons each year. Through the combined efforts of the Alliance, the ASO and the High, The Woodruff also offers remarkable educational programming, serving nearly 200,000 students annually and making it Georgia’s largest arts educator. www.woodruffcenter.org.

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