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**THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN HOSTS ICELANDIC ARTIST RAGNAR KJARTANSSON'S
S.S. HANGOVER IN THE LAGOON OFF OF ITS LAGUNA GLORIA LOCATION**



Including a score by composer Kjartan Sveinsson performed by musicians from Austin's Density512 chamber orchestra, S.S. Hangover is a fantastical, kinetic sound sculpture that will be performed at Laguna Gloria this spring

Ragnar Kjartansson, S.S. Hangover, 2013

Performances April 7, 8, 14, 15, and 28, and May 5 and 6, 2018, 11A–3P

Sunset performance April 22, 4–8P, in partnership with the Fusebox Festival.

The S.S. Hangover sculpture will be docked and visible from the shores of Laguna Gloria May 7 through June 3, 2018.

MARCH 12, 2017, AUSTIN, TEXAS – The Contemporary Austin presents the playfully absurd kinetic sound sculpture *S.S. Hangover*, 2013, by Icelandic artist Ragnar Kjartansson, an artwork consisting of a musical performance enacted by musicians on a historic fishing boat circling the water. Part sculpture, part performance, part endurance test, *S.S. Hangover* will be performed on select weekend dates from April 7 through May 6, 2018, in the lagoon off of the shore of The Contemporary Austin – Laguna Gloria, 3809 West 35th Street. Outside of these performance dates, the vessel will be docked and viewable from the shoreline through June 3, 2018.

Inspired by a scene featuring a cocktail bar in the form of a ship from the 1935 American film *Remember Last Night?*, Ragnar Kjartansson's *S.S. Hangover* consists of a hand-painted, restored vintage Icelandic fishing boat that carries a party of six brass musicians, dressed in formal attire and performing an ethereal score composed by Kjartansson's longtime collaborator, Kjartan Sveinsson, a musician who spent fifteen years with the band Sigur Rós. Its billowing sail festooned with a peculiarly plump Pegasus figure, the boat meanders around the lagoon for four hours as the musicians play for the duration, testing the performers' endurance as the vessel circles in the water again and again. As the title suggests, the dizzying, daydream-like performance suggests both the hazy after-effects of a night of celebration and an inspiring, romantic, and melancholy metaphor for the passage of time.

"Both delightful and absurd, *S.S. Hangover* plays with notions of irony and sincerity, artifice and authenticity, and fantasy and reality, putting forth existential humor as a commentary on the human condition," said Andrea Mellard, Director of Public Programs and Community Engagement at The Contemporary Austin. "The work seems simple at first, but the more you consider what you are seeing and hearing, the 'curiouser' this nautical oddity begins to seem. Did these musicians just come from a cocktail party? Is this boat Venetian? Grecian? Scandinavian? When does a performance become a sculpture and when does a sculpture become a performance? As the playfully impossible performance enters its second, third, or fourth hour, how can those musicians keep playing? Or can they?"

S.S. Hangover debuted in 2013 at the 55th Venice Biennale, followed by performances on the water of New York's Central Park in 2015. The installation and performances in Austin are organized by The Contemporary Austin and curated by Andrea Mellard, Director of Public Programs and Community Engagement. The musicians aboard the *S.S. Hangover* come from Austin's contemporary chamber orchestra collective, Density512 (www.density512.org).

More information and a full curatorial statement are available at thecontemporaryaustin.org/sshangover.

RAGNAR KJARTANSSON

Ragnar Kjartansson (b. 1976) lives and works in Reykjavík. The artist has had solo exhibitions at the Reykjavík Art Museum; the Barbican Centre, London; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Park, Washington D.C.; the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal; the Palais de Tokyo, Paris; the New Museum, New York; the Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zurich; the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; the Frankfurter Kunstverein; and the BAWAG Contemporary, Vienna. Kjartansson participated in *The Encyclopedic Palace* at the Venice Biennale in 2013, Manifesta 10 in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2014, and he represented Iceland at the 2009 Venice Biennale. A video work by Kjartansson was shown at Arthouse at the Jones Center (now The Contemporary Austin) in 2011. The artist is the recipient of the 2015 Artes Mundi's Derek Williams Trust Purchase Award, and Performa's 2011 Malcolm McLaren Award.

Trained as a painter, Kjartansson now works primarily in film, video, and performance, often using musicians and actors in works that incorporate repetition, duration, and musical showmanship.

THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

As Austin's only museum solely focused on contemporary artists and their work, The Contemporary Austin offers exhibitions, educational opportunities, and events that start conversations and fuel the city's creative spirit. Known for artist-centric exhibitions and collaborations, The Contemporary invites exploration at both its urban and natural settings—downtown at the Jones Center (700 Congress Avenue), lakeside at the Laguna Gloria campus (3809 West 35th Street), and around Austin through the Museum Without Walls program.

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Image: Ragnar Kjartansson, *S.S. Hangover*, 2013. Performance for a boat and brass sextet. Music by Kjartan Sveinsson. Originally performed in the Arsenale, Venice, during the 55th Venice Biennale, Italy, June 1 to

November 24, 2013, daily for six hours. Artwork © Ragnar Kjartansson. Courtesy the artist; Luhring Augustine, New York; and i8 Gallery, Reykjavik. Photograph by Lilja Birgisdóttir.