



Lehman Art Gallery, City University of New York
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – NEW TWO-PART EXHIBITION, AUTUMN 2026

DOES THIS TASTE FUNNY?

Curated by Melissa Brown and John O'Connor

September 8 – December 13, 2026 | Sarah Lawrence Opening reception Tuesday, September 8, 5-8 p.m.

September 9, 2026 – January 16, 2027 | Lehman College Art Gallery Opening reception Wednesday, September 9, 5-8 p.m.

Lehman College Art Gallery and **The Gallery at Heimbald Visual Arts Center** at Sarah Lawrence College are pleased to present *Does This Taste Funny?*, a sweeping two-venue group exhibition showcasing the work of 41 contemporary artists. Opening in September 2026, the exhibition marks a collaboration between Sarah Lawrence College, where co-curator John O'Connor is faculty in the Visual and Studio Arts Program, and Lehman College, CUNY, where co-curator Melissa Brown teaches in the Department of Art.

Does This Taste Funny? explores humor in contemporary art as a generative method for shifting perception. While humor in art is often mistaken for a lack of seriousness, other fields treat laughter as anything but trivial: developmental psychologists read early laughter as evidence of a mind forming expectations about the world, political theory recognizes the joke as a tool of dissent, and linguists study the punchline as a window into how meaning is built. Within this

framework, the participating artists actively embrace humor to disarm viewers and bypass intellectual defenses.

The curators have organized these artistic strategies into six distinct thematic groupings, demonstrating how artists wield specific comedic styles to their advantage. Artists leverage **The Body** through slapstick and physical comedy to provoke visceral empathy, and they lean into **Material Absurdity** to highlight the irrationality of daily life. They deploy **Politics** via satire and dark humor as a weapon to undermine authority, while utilizing **Language** through wordplay and puns to reveal how meaning is constructed and deconstructed. Finally, they turn a critical eye inward with **Art Humor**, poking fun at opaque institutional conventions through parody, spoof, and sharp observation, and they explore **Technology** through deadpan delivery and the uncanny to critique our increasingly digital existence.

By utilizing these strategies, the exhibition frames humor as a method to evade our preconceptions about the world, exposing incongruities in our political, personal, and institutional lives. Throughout the show and its connected programming, the artwork serves as a catalyst for a dialogue that reaches across psychology, politics, the art world, philosophy, language, and comedy itself.

Artists: Charles Atlas, Brian Belott, Ana Benaroya, Claudia Bitrán, Tony Bluestone, Becky Brown, Wells Chandler, Roz Chast, Kari Cholnoky, Shamus Clisset, Jeremy Couillard, Chris Crary, Aline Kominsky-Crumb, Lily Dabe, Jill Danenberg, Robert DeJesus, Radamés “Juni” Figueroa, Al Freeman, Tom Friedman, Water McBeer, Ray Johnson, Irena Jurek, Michael Mahalchick, Tony Matelli, John Vasquez Mejias, Riad Miah, Kristen Mills, Rachelle Mozman Solano, Elizabeth Murray, Ebecho Muslimova, Narcissister, Scott Reeder, Tyson Reeder, Spain Rodriguez, Peter Saul, Cindy Sherman, Michael Smith, Federico Solmi, Jacques Louis Vidal, Karl Wirsum

The exhibition will be accompanied by a joint 120-page commemorative catalog, which will be published in November 2026.

The exhibiton at Lehman College Art Gallery is suppoted by The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York State Council on the Arts; Charina Foundation, Inc.; Jarvis and Constance Doctorow Family Foundation; Edith and Herbert Lehman Foundation; Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation; Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation; The Keith Haring Foundation; and The New Yankee Stadium Community Benefits Fund.