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## **New Museum Presents “Nicole Eisenman: Al-ugh-ories,” the First New York Museum Survey Exhibition of the Artist’s Work**

**The Exhibition by the 2015 MacArthur Fellow Features Paintings and Sculptures  
Produced Over the Last Two Decades**

**May 4–June 26, 2016**

New York, NY...“Nicole Eisenman: Al-ugh-ories” marks the **first New York museum survey exhibition of Nicole Eisenman’s work** and provides an in-depth look at the symbolic nature of the artist’s most striking depictions of individuals and groups—from intimate portraits to more complex narrative scenes. One of the most important painters of her generation, Eisenman (b. 1965, Verdun, France) has developed a distinct figurative language that combines the imaginative with the lucid, the absurd with the banal, and the stereotypical with the countercultural and queer. “Nicole Eisenman: Al-ugh-ories” highlights how allegory permeates Eisenman’s oeuvre and how she fluidly ties the fictional to the autobiographical and the past to the present. **The exhibition is on view on the Third Floor of the New Museum from May 4 to June 26, 2016.**

From the outset of her career, Eisenman’s investment in painting has led to frequent experimentation in other mediums, and her practice is characterized by visible shifts that mark her effort never to become too comfortable with any one approach to painting. Eisenman’s preoccupation with the figure and the complexity of its gestures and forms has resulted in mesmerizing portraits of an array of characters who range from friends and fellow New Yorkers to imagined heroines and tragic losers. ***From Success to Obscurity*** (2004) depicts a monstrous superhero contemplating the contents of a letter it holds in its hands and alludes, perhaps, to the fragility of fame and fortune. In ***Hamlet*** (2007), a depiction of Shakespeare’s beautiful and frail Danish prince with lowered sword, Eisenman ponders the possibility of a sensitive and cautious leader at a time when the US was in the final years of George W. Bush’s presidency. Similarly inspired by contemporary events, the large group portrait ***The Triumph of Poverty*** (2009), painted in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, is a reimagining of a lost sixteenth-century painting of the same title by Hans Holbein. “Nicole Eisenman: Al-ugh-ories” also includes **one of the artist’s large-scale plaster figures**, which she began producing in recent years, and **two new sculptures made specifically for this exhibition.**

In her often-narrative compositions Eisenman draws as much from art history as from popular culture, and her works, while accessible and humorous, occasionally yield critical and poignant images of contemporary life. Eisenman freely references painters as varied as Giotto, Francisco de Goya, Paul Cézanne, Edvard Munch, and Pablo Picasso, but uses wit and irreverence to undermine historical hierarchies and to make her depictions of familiar events such as eating, sleeping, walking, or making love appear distinctly contemporary. While Eisenman's subjects and narratives have always been in conversation with the present moment, her work remains timeless and captivating because of her ability to portray the essence of human desire as equally raw and awkward.

The exhibition is curated by Helga Christoffersen, Assistant Curator, and Massimiliano Gioni, Artistic Director. It is accompanied by a fully illustrated publication that includes an interview with the artist conducted by Gioni and Christoffersen, a new essay on Eisenman's practice by writer Grace Dunham, and a contribution by poet Eileen Myles.

### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Nicole Eisenman was born in Verdun, France, in 1965 and lives and works in New York. In 2014 the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis mounted a major exhibition of her work, "Dear Nemesis, Nicole Eisenman 1993–2013," which traveled to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, in late 2014 and to the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in 2015. Additional solo presentations of her work have taken place at the Jewish Museum, New York (2015); the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, CA (2013); Studio Voltaire, London (2012); the Katzen Arts Center, American University, Washington, DC (2011); the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY (2009); and Kunsthalle Zürich (2007). Her work was included in Manifesta 10, St. Petersburg (2014); the 2013 Carnegie International, Pittsburgh; the Whitney Biennial, New York (2012 and 1995); and Prospect.2 New Orleans (2011). Eisenman's work has been featured in numerous recent group exhibitions at institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2015); the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2014); the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, University of Chicago (2014); the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (2014); the New Museum, New York (2013); and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2011). Eisenman is a 2015 MacArthur Fellow.

### **SUPPORT**

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## **ABOUT NEW MUSEUM**

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

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