

Blaffer Art Museum  
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**Blaffer Art Museum Presents *Pam Francis Photographs***

On view April 19—26, 2022

HOUSTON, TX | MARCH 30, 2022 ---

The Blaffer Art Museum at the University of Houston is proud to present the first museum survey exhibition of distinguished Houston-born artist and photographer Pam Francis (1954-2020). The exhibition, titled *Pam Francis Photographs*, will be presented in the Joanne Guest Wilson Gallery of the Museum, and will run from April 19–April 26, 2022. Francis was an alumna of the University of Texas at Austin with a B.F.A. in Photography and Graphic Design from the College of Fine Arts.

As one of the top editorial and portrait photographers in Texas, Francis photographed the covers of *Texas Monthly* beginning in 1991 with Dan Rather, *CBS Evening News* anchor, and Oscar Wyatt, founder and CEO of Coastal Corporation, as well as Texas Lt. Governor, William “Bill” Hobby, Jr. in 1997. By 2001, Francis was chief photographer for the *Houston Texans Got Tickets* billboard campaigns, which included shooting iconic images of Lyle Lovett, the members of Destiny’s Child, Dusty Hill and Frank Beard of ZZ Top, Roger Clemens, and President George H.W. Bush and Barbara Bush. Throughout her career, Francis presented a sustained, eloquent, and insightful exploration of portraiture. She was fearless, bold, and clearly communicated the vitality she derived from her subjects.

While Francis’ portraits have been on the covers of *Texas Monthly*, *Time*, *Business Week*, *XXL*, *Source*, and *Sports Illustrated*, her work has not yet had the critical attention to be comprehensively studied and celebrated.

Lyle Lovett was a great fan of Francis and highlighted her talent with those she photographed. In his words, “...you don’t just see the subject, you see the subject responding to Pam... First and foremost, she was, technically, a great photographer. She knew it. But that’s not enough...Pam was able to bring herself to her knowledge of photography and it was a wonderful combination.”

Dan Rather was also impressed with Francis and after thirty years, vividly remembered her great passion and enthusiasm. He reflects, “...She was a kind of walking, breathing, nuclear power plant of energy...” Rather also appreciated Francis’ approach in the photo shoot, “... there is one thing I appreciate about Pam that I did not realize until later. She never asked me to pose or do anything unusual...she listened, she asked some questions, she struck up an immediate rapport with me and made me very, very comfortable.”

In 2001, Francis worked as the lead photographer in Houston for *XXL*, a New York-based-hip-hop magazine founded in 1997. Francis took the portraits of UGK’s (Underground Kingz—formed by Pimp C and Bun B) Grammy nominated album *Dirty Money*. Bun B appreciated Francis’ awareness of the moment with the early formation of

Southern Rap in Houston. He elaborates, “she was seeing that, all of a sudden, she was getting a lot of work to shoot rappers in Houston...I think she is just a great example of a Texan. Using her talent to benefit other Texans ...She was trying to make all of us look the best that we can, ... “

*Pam Francis: Photographs* will span 30 years of Francis’ art practice from 1987-2020, assembling over 100 photographs and collecting artifacts that include the artist’s camera, selected slides, contact sheets, CDs, films, and ephemera. Please check the Blaffer Art Museum websites in the coming weeks for more details.

Christine Starkman, Guest Curator of the exhibition worked closely with Steven Matijcio, Jane Dale Owen Director and Chief Curator at the Blaffer Art Museum, in selecting the works for the exhibition and the catalog.

This exhibition will be accompanied by a full-color catalogue designed by Miko McGinty, and printed by Trifolio in Verona, Italy, and will be available in April 2022. This is the first monograph dedicated to the work of Francis, and it will feature essays by Teresa Hubbard, William and Bettye Nowlin Professor in Photography at the University of Texas at Austin, Keliy Anderson-Staley, Associate Professor of Photography and Digital Media at the University of Houston, and Britt Thomas, interdisciplinary artist and lecturer at Sam Houston State University, as well as eleven interviews conducted by Christine Starkman.

**For more information or to request high-resolution images, please contact [infoblaffer@uh.edu](mailto:infoblaffer@uh.edu).**

## About Blaffer Art Museum

Founded in 1973, the Blaffer Art Museum endeavors to further the understanding of contemporary art through exhibitions, publications, and public programs. As the gateway between the University of Houston’s Central campus and the City of Houston, Blaffer Art Museum is a catalyst for creative innovation, experimentation, and scholarship. Its exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public, create community through dialogue and participation, and inspire an appreciation for the visual arts as a vital force in shaping contemporary culture.

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## Visitor Information

120 Fine Arts Building  
University of Houston  
Houston, TX 77204

Museum Hours:  
Tues–Fri, 10–5pm  
Sat–Sun, 12–5pm

Admission is always free.

## About Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts

The University of Houston's Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts is a premier institution for education, scholarship, and innovation in the arts, where every day we are cultivating the next generation of creative professionals and unlocking the potential of the arts to impact society and change the world. Our students are forging new frontiers and advancing the arts through academic excellence, innovative programming, and—together with our world renown faculty—ascending to the highest level of contemporary professional practice. Houston is a first choice for the arts. Houston is a city of culture and diversity, a quintessential arts destination, and a gateway to the international arts community. Steeped in the richness of diverse cultures, Houston and its engaging community network provide a citywide laboratory for research, education, and practice in the performing and visual arts.