

# BAL HARBOUR

## **Bal Harbour announces Christy Gast as the next "Unscripted" Public Art Commission winning artist**

### **Christy Gast creates Unscripted's latest installation to debut in April**

Bal Harbour, Fla. – Feb 25, 2013

As the next component of its ongoing support for the arts in South Florida, Bal Harbour has commissioned artist Christy Gast to create an installation as part of the destination's public art program, "Unscripted." To be unveiled in April, "Self Portrait As A Barefoot Mailman," Gast's 12-foot high sculptural installation, will be wedged headfirst into the ground, as if blown-over. The faux bronze sculpture made of fiberglass is a testament to the area's legendary barefoot mailman, a real historic figure who carried the mail on the first U.S. mail route between Palm Beach and Miami in the 1880's before there were major roads. Drawing on the history of South Florida as well as Miami Dade's history of public sculpture, Gast will create a playful alternative to the traditionally overstated and masculinized civic monument.

Past artworks by sculptor and video artist Gast often feature herself in costume as the central character, making it natural for Gast to transform this mailman figure into her likeness. Gast had a laser scan taken of herself dressed up as the legendary mailman assuming a monument-like posture, and used this as the basis for the sculpture. In doing so, she presents a subterfuge – an impersonation of the character of the mailman, infused with her female persona.

Gast also adds another dimension of humor and unexpected subversion – she plans to install the "Self Portrait As A Barefoot Mailman" upside-down and partially buried as if having been blown over by a strong storm and landing head-first, a witty gesture to having one's head quite literally "buried in the sand."

"I wanted the viewer to see this piece and immediately be able to discern that it's a historical rendition of a person upside and blown over," said Gast. "I was toying with the notion of history by adding to the history of Bal Harbour."

Gast has exhibited her past work in the U.S. and internationally, including at the Miami Art Museum in Miami, MoMA PS1 in New York, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions in California, Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich and Centro Cultural Matucana 100 in Santiago, Chile. Created to support and challenge the artistic talents in South Florida, "Unscripted" was launched in November 2012 with "Pax Americana" by first winning artist George Sanchez-Calderon. His two iconic art installations, "Americana" and "Levittown House" were also inspired by Bal Harbour's storied history, both as one of the first planned communities in South Florida as well as home of the original Americana hotel that hosted many presidents and political events.

The program is supported by the Unscripted Chat series. The next chat, scheduled for Spring, will be on "The Economics of Public Art."

Art enthusiasts can also take home a piece of Bal Harbour's impressive "Unscripted" art installations with a new series of limited-edition items from the winning artists. These miniature versions of the large-scale installations are for sale by calling (305) 321-5406 or emailing [unscripted@balharbourflorida.com](mailto:unscripted@balharbourflorida.com). Profits from all sales will go directly back to fund future commissions.

“Unscripted” is curated by Claire Breukel, who consulted with contemporary art and public art experts including Yvonne Force Villareal, President and Co-Founder of the Art Production Fund; Solita Mishaan, a Bal Harbour resident, collector and member of the International Council for TATE London; and celebrated artists Hernan Bas and Hank Willis Thomas on the selection of the winning artists.

For more information on “Unscripted,” please visit: [www.balharbourflorida.com/unscriptedartprojects](http://www.balharbourflorida.com/unscriptedartprojects) and follow Bal Harbour on Facebook and Twitter.

UPCOMING: March 23 Christy Gast unveils "Self Portrait As A Barefoot Mailman". on the Founder's Circle on Collins Avenue in Bal Harbour Village .

\*\*\*

Unscripted project was created to support and challenge the artistic talents in South Florida. It is an ongoing series of commissions geared toward providing artists with a platform to create significant and ambitious projects that contributes to the growth of the South Florida artist community.

In its first year, Unscripted Bal Harbour has commissioned two ambitious projects. This coming March, sculptor, installation and video artist Christy Gast will unveil her sculptural installation "Self Portrait As The Barefoot Mailman". on the Founder's Circle in Bal Harbour Village. "Self Portrait As The Barefoot Mailman". is a sculptural installation based on the legend of a postman that traversed the South Florida coastline by foot and by boat to deliver mail. This follows George Sánchez-Calderón's highly publicized installations "Levittown House" and "Americana" on the front lawn of the St Regis Bal Harbour Resort, that debuted the Unscripted project commission series in October last year.

The “Unscripted” public art commission is spearheaded by curator Claire Breukel, who has served on various art-related boards and has curated exhibitions in South Africa, New York, Miami, Vienna and El Salvador. To reach the final decision, she consulted with contemporary art and public art experts including Yvonne Force Villareal, President and Co-Founder of the Art Production Fund; Solita Mishaan, a Bal Harbour resident, collector and member of the International Council for TATE London; and celebrated artists Hernan Bas and Hank Willis Thomas.