



MINNESOTA
MUSEUM of
AMERICAN ART

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Lookin up! Minnesota Museum of American Art Presents a Skyway Installation by Jose Dominguez

August 13, 2020— St. Paul, MN—With his installation *It's Okay to Laugh*, Twin Cities-based artist Jose Dominguez fills the windows of the skyway above Robert Street with lively and colorful vinyl designs of imagined creatures. These characters capture the dynamism of the skyway system—a space people move through repeatedly, but where they always encounter new faces.



Jose Dominguez (born 1989, Casa Grande, Arizona)

It's Okay to Laugh, 2020

Skyway above Robert Street, St. Paul, MN

(Just beyond the Robert Street and 4th Street intersection)

Courtesy of the artist and Minnesota Museum of American Art

Dominguez aims to interrupt the daily ebb and flow of traffic through the skyway and on the streets below by influencing the space with a sense of play, as his exaggerated characters play hide-and-seek with the public.

Taking their inspiration from classic children's illustrations such as *The Pink Panther*, these joyful and unexpected creatures highlight the absurdity and humor of daily human interactions.

Dominguez developed the concept for *It's Okay to Laugh* before the pandemic, and it was scheduled to be installed at the end of May, days after the murder of George Floyd. The community needed time to grieve and reflect, and the installation was postponed while Dominguez participated in efforts to create murals honoring George Floyd and demanding justice. In thinking about *It's Okay to Laugh* in the context of our complicated moment, Dominguez has shared these thoughts:

I believe this bright and playful installation still holds purpose in bringing joy and healing to viewers. Although this tragedy has reminded us of the important work we need to do, and the pandemic has created uncertain times, it's natural to have moments where you laugh out loud, even if it seems out of place.

The M and Dominguez would like to thank the City of St. Paul's Department of Public Works and Department of Safety and Inspections, Ward 2 Councilmember Rebecca Noecker, the CapitolRiver Council and its Skyway Governance Advisory Committee, and the Pioneer Endicott and First National Bank building owners for their support of this installation.



About the Minnesota Museum of American Art

Minnesota Museum of American Art is one of the oldest visual arts organizations in Minnesota, with roots stretching back to the 19th century. Based in St. Paul, the M currently holds more than 5,000 artworks that showcase the unique voices of American artists, guided by the belief that art should reflect the constantly shifting landscape that defines the American experience. The M opened its new museum facility in the Historic Pioneer Endicott in December 2018 and will expand further, with additional permanent collection galleries to be added.

[Out of care and concern for our staff and community, the M is currently closed due to COVID-19.]

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