



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Miriam Taylor
Media Contact, Ogden Museum of Southern Art
925 Camp Street
New Orleans, LA 70130
504-539-9631
mtaylor@ogdenmuseum.org

**OGDEN MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN ART PRESENTS
*MAUDE SCHUYLER CLAY: MISSISSIPPI HISTORY***

NEW ORLEANS, LA— On October 1, 2016 the Ogden Museum of Southern Art will open the exhibition *Maude Schuyler Clay: Mississippi History*. This will be the first showing of her color portrait collection from this time period at a major museum.

Maude Schuyler Clay, born in Greenwood, Mississippi, began working on her color portrait series after receiving her first Rolleiflex 2 ¼ camera in 1975 from her cousin and fellow photographer, William Eggleston. At the time, she was living and working in New York and paying frequent visits to her native Mississippi Delta, whose landscape and people continued to inspire her. Over the next 25 years, the project, which began as *The Mississippians*, evolved in part as an homage to Julia Margaret Cameron, a definitive pioneer of the art of photography. Clay's expressive, allegorical portraits of her friends, family and other Mississippians, as well as her artful approach to capturing the essence of light, are the driving forces behind her recollection of moments of family life in Mississippi in the 1980s and 90s.

The overwhelming personal quality of her portraits comes with the implicit permission of her subjects, relying on the relationship forged to create the calm order that she strives for in form and content. With familial roots reaching back five generations in the Mississippi Delta, Clay's connection to the surrounding landscape is evident in her work, which she describes as a visual record of *her* Mississippi Delta.

Ogden Museum of Southern Art's Curator of Photography, Richard McCabe, says of the exhibition, "*Mississippi History* is the culmination of over two decades of photographic exploration in color portraiture by Maude Schuyler Clay. These portraits capture the cast of characters in Clay's everyday world, including family, friends and strangers. Together these portraits tell not only the photographer's personal history, but also the history of Mississippi in the late 20th century."

This exhibition features photographs from the 2015 Steidl publication, also titled *Mississippi History*, as well as a small selection of photographs not included in the book.

In his forward to the book Richard Ford writes, "Clay's photographs are especially human - in their subject matter, and in the photographer's insistence that we be moved by art to look closely, and that photographs are good when they are as complex as we are."

An opening reception for the exhibition will take place during New Orleans' annual Art for Arts' Sake Celebration, October 1 from 6-9pm. The exhibition will be on view from October 1, 2016 to January 15, 2017.

BIO

After graduating from the University of Mississippi and the Memphis Academy of Arts, Maude Schuyler Clay worked as assistant to the photographer William Eggleston, her cousin. She then moved to New York City, where she worked at LIGHT Gallery before becoming photography editor at *Esquire*. During her time in New York she photographed for several publication including *Esquire*, *Fortune*, and *Vanity Fair*. After returning back to the Mississippi Delta in 1987, she continued her color portrait work, receiving the Mississippi Arts and Letters award for photography in 1988 and in 1992. In 1993 she began a series of stark black and white photographs recording the Delta landscape, for which she received the Mississippi Art Commission's Individual Artist Grant in 1998. She is the author of the widely recognized monograph, *Delta Land*, which showcases her black and white landscape studies. Her work is held in numerous collections, including The Museum of Modern Art, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and The National Museum for Women in the Arts.

###

Located in the vibrant Warehouse Arts District of downtown New Orleans, Louisiana, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art holds the largest collection of Southern art and is recognized for its original exhibitions, public events, and educational programs which examine the development of visual art alongside Southern traditions of music, literature, and culinary heritage to provide a comprehensive story of the South. Established in 1999 and in Stephen Goldring Hall since 2003, the Museum welcomes almost 80,000 visitors annually, and attracts diverse audiences through its broad range of programming including exhibitions, lectures, film screenings, and concerts which are all part of its mission to broaden the knowledge, understanding, interpretation, and appreciation of the visual arts and culture of the American South.

The Ogden Museum is open Wednesday through Monday from 10AM-5PM and also on Thursdays from 6-8PM for Ogden After Hours. Admission is free to Museum Members and \$13.50 for adults, \$11 for seniors 65 and older, \$7.25 for children ages 5-17 and free for children under 5.

The Ogden Museum is free to Louisiana Residents on Thursdays from 10AM-5PM courtesy of The Helis Foundation. The Helis Foundation is a Louisiana private foundation, established by the William Helis Family. The Art Funds of the Helis Foundation advance access to the arts for the community through contributions that sustain operations for, provide free admission to, acquire

works of art, and underwrite major exhibitions and projects of institutions within the Greater New Orleans area.

The Museum is closed Martin Luther King Day, Lundi Gras and Mardi Gras, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and day following, Christmas Day and New Years Day.

The Museum is located at 925 Camp Street, New Orleans Louisiana 70130. For more information visit ogdenmuseum.org or call [504-539-9650](tel:504-539-9650).