



LOS ANGELES, California, November 16, 2020— LSH CoLab Artists Curating Artists Series is pleased to introduce *HUGS!*, a drawing exhibition by artist Michael G. Bauer, curated by Bettina Hubby, on view from December 5, 2020 to January 16, 2021, featuring more than 200 drawings produced by Bauer over the last decade.

In *HUGS!*, Bauer explores a broad range of haptic communication. All of the drawings are rendered in ink with Bauer's characteristic contour line work, reminiscent of Raymond Pettibon and

other 20th century auto-didactics. The early drawings often feature an embracing couple and later drawings illustrate interdependence and feature individuals stretching their sinewy looping arms to embrace each other from the other side of the picture plane. The drawings highlight Bauer's ongoing interest in psychological experience and human connection, as an artist, a marriage and family therapist, and clinical art therapist.

Working within the theme of affection, the work unfurls into diverse styles and messages. Some of the drawings possess the sentimental, dreamy quality of a vintage advertisement or distant cousin of an early Warhol illustration, others seep with an underlying tension as if the hug is more attuned with a wrestling match, a tussle, or confrontation.

Bauer's hug drawings have an additional and eerie new layer of meaning in 2020 amid the pandemic, significant social upheaval, and the ongoing political bifurcation of our country. They become symbols of a bygone time that predate social distancing and the health risks now paired with physical closeness. They also serve as a reminder of the necessity for connection in times when there is a societal schism that is its own form of distancing.

Bauer refers to this body of work as an ongoing meditation on optimism. "Being exposed to drawings about human connection can offer an alternative to the past four years of amplified conflict, unhelpful noise, and negative news. My ongoing goal through these drawings is to remind myself and the viewer to imagine and predict possibilities for closeness."

RSVP to schedule viewing time on opening day, December 5, 2020, 3:00–5:00 p.m. *HUGS!* will be on view by appointment through January 16, 2021.

For RSVPs and inquiries, please contact: [laura@matrushka.com](mailto:laura@matrushka.com) and [bettina@hubbyco.com](mailto:bettina@hubbyco.com).  
Image: *Hug #47*, Michael G. Bauer, 2015. Ink and pen on paper, 9 x 12 inches.