MATTRESS FACTORY RECEIVES CLIR GRANT TO DIGITIZE GREER LANKTON ARCHIVE

(PITTSBURGH, PA February 2020) – The Mattress Factory is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), through its Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives program. This grant will be used to digitize the Greer Lankton Archive, which includes 14,153 items amassed throughout Lankton’s life and comprises the largest concentration of the artist’s work and related material anywhere.

In July 2014, Greer Lankton’s parents gifted the Mattress Factory a collection of personal papers, photographs and related material, which they had saved throughout Lankton’s life and which they had recovered after her death in 1996. An unfiltered view into the life and work of one of the most significant artists to have taken part in the revolutionary art scene in New York City’s East Village during the 1980s, the collection includes drawings and paintings, sculptures, sketchbooks, photographs, correspondence, personal journals, press clippings and more. These materials trace Lankton’s artistic development from childhood, studies at Pratt Institute and exhibitions at downtown New York’s Civilian Warfare gallery, as well as her personal relationships (including those with artists such as Nan Goldin), gender reassignment surgery, and struggles with addiction and anorexia.

Digitizing Hidden Special Collections and Archives: Enabling New Scholarship through Increasing Access to Unique Materials is a national grant competition administered by the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) for digitizing rare and unique content in collecting institutions. The grant program is made possible by funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. With the CLIR grant, the Mattress Factory plans to digitize and make accessible the entire Greer Lankton archive.

The project will result in item-level catalog records and a finding aid to the digitized collection, which will be available through the museum’s online archive. This will mark the first time access most of the pieces will be available to the public. Once completed, this project will contribute significant content and context to understanding Lankton’s art and allow for new scholarly study relating to issues of gender identity and tolerance.

About Greer Lankton
Greer Lankton was an American artist whose work is autobiographical and revealing of her obsessions. Lankton’s dolls and environments possess a disarming mix of innocence and decadence, hope and pathos. She said her work was “all about me,” reflecting her life as an artist, as a transgender person and a drug addict. But beyond this, and as an outsider, Lankton eloquently explored and questioned the norms of gender and sexuality, as well as the powerful imagery of popular culture and consumerism.

About CLIR
The Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) is an independent, nonprofit organization that forges strategies to enhance research, teaching, and learning environments in collaboration with libraries, cultural institutions, and communities of higher learning. To learn more, visit www.clir.org and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

About the Mattress Factory: Hailed as the best museum for installation art in the United States, the Mattress Factory invites visitors to experience “art you can get into.” Over the past 42 years, the Mattress Factory has presented and commissioned new installation and performance works by over 750 artists, both established and emerging, who have challenged themselves and their audiences through the support of the museum’s exceptional residency program. The Mattress Factory’s outreach programs serve more than 30,000 students, teachers, adults, and families annually, and its
activities as a visitor attraction, educator and employer continue to invigorate Pittsburgh’s North Side. For more information, call 412.231.3169 or visit mattress.org.

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