

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**HIGH MUSEUM OF ART TO HOST FOURTH ANNUAL COLLECTORS EVENING
TO HELP BUILD PERMANENT COLLECTION**

New acquisitions to be chosen among seven proposed works from each of the High's curatorial departments.

ATLANTA, Dec. 18, 2012 – The High Museum of Art will host the fourth annual Collectors Evening on Jan. 11, 2013. Seven works will be presented for acquisition during the evening, one from each of the High's curatorial departments. Attendees will cast their ballots, and the High will purchase the works of art with the most votes. The number of acquisitions will depend on funds raised via benefactors and ticket sales. The event is open to the public; tickets and additional information can be found at www.high.org/CollectorsEvening.

This year the event will also feature an auction component in which guests can bid on works for their own collections. These include works by such artists as Kael Alford, Shane Lavalette, Leonard Freed and Arthur Grace, among others.

“The curatorial team looks forward to this evening of spirited competition each year,” said David Brenneman, the High's director of collections and exhibitions and Frances B. Bunzl family curator of European art.

“It is a rare opportunity for the curators to share their expertise and passion for art with Museum supporters,” said Michael Shapiro, the Museum's Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr. director. “Although Collectors Evening is only four years old, the Museum has already acquired more than 13 new works. It's a wonderful, fun way of engaging people in our permanent collection.”

Collectors Evening was established in 2010 as a means to add works to the permanent collection while providing a lively evening of face-to-face conversation with the High's curators. Since its inception, Collectors Evening participants have selected a total of 13 acquisitions for the Museum. Three of these works were acquired last year including “Down Time,” an acrylic on canvas by KAWS, Hiroshi Sugimoto's photograph “Lightning Fields” and “Crochet Chair” from designer Marcel Wanders.

This year's proposed acquisitions include the following:

African Art

The proposed work for the African art collection is a wooden mask by a Pende artist of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (ca. 1875-1925). The extreme distortion of the face on this mask resembles that of one of the women depicted in Picasso's famous 1907 painting “Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)” Within Pende communities, masks with distorted faces represent individuals who have fallen into a fire, leaving their faces permanently disfigured. The masks promote compassion toward individuals who have suffered such calamities. This striking mask would join other important Pende works of art in the High's collection, including a magnificent

feather mask currently on view, a Pende cup currently on view, two face masks and a ceremonial axe.

American Art

George Henry Yewell's oil on canvas "Self Defense" (1854) is the proposed acquisition from the American art department. Set on the streets of 1850s New York, "Self Defense" shows a boy preparing a snowball in response to one that landed just inches away from him. Yet this vignette is not merely one of child's play. A painter of genre scenes often embedded with wry commentary, George Henry Yewell includes a series of broadsides plastered to the building walls, which advertise the various mass entertainments that in Yewell's day had generated scandal, moral protest or even political debate. In many ways, "Self Defense" serves as a timeless American allegory, promoting the quick wit and strength of character required to steel oneself against various temptations.

Decorative Arts and Design

The decorative arts and design department will put forward "Spun," a chaise prototype by Mathias Bengtsson, as an acquisition. In the late 1990s, Danish-born Bengtsson made a name for himself by combining innovative technology and new materials with more traditional handcraftsmanship to create decidedly unique and expressive forms, including the recently acquired "Slice Chair" (1999). Woven from just 2.5 kg of carbon fiber using computer technology, the feather-light, semi-transparent structure of "Spun" belies the extraordinary strength of the carbon itself. This particular work is the only surviving prototype for this extraordinary design.

European Art

French artist Edmé-Alexis-Alfred Dehodencq's "Self-Portrait" (ca. 1870) is being presented for acquisition by the European art department. This oil-on-canvas work is a penetrating self-depiction that brings to mind several of Rembrandt's mature self-portraits in the attire of the sitter, his pose and the picture's overall seriousness and monumentality. Signed and dedicated to Dehodencq's friend and fellow Orientalist painter Eugène Fromentin (1820–1876), the work was probably given as a gift in thanks for Fromentin's recommendation that Dehodencq, along with seven other artists, including Gustave Courbet, receive the prestigious Légion d'honneur in 1870. This painting will complement one of the High's most important European paintings, Eugène Fromentin's "Arabs on the Way to the Pastures of Tell."

Folk Art

The folk art department will propose Thornton Dial's assembled painting "The Money Business" (2012). During Dial's lifetime, he has watched industry supplant agriculture in many parts of his native state of Alabama, as factories, industrial plants and steel mills have flourished, altering forever workers' lives and surroundings. Featuring layers of found objects that evoke layers of meaning, "The Money Business" acknowledges the ascendancy of industry and the changes it has brought. The denim background represents both a factory wall and the uniform of the worker. A ghostly nest made from scrap metal houses a bird composed of metal tubing and mattress springs. The greens and reds of the canvas speak to profit at the expense of the land and its human cost.

Modern and Contemporary Art

The proposed acquisition for the modern and contemporary art department is Joyce Pensato's "Hey Now" (2012). Although Joyce Pensato has been working in Brooklyn since the 1970s, she has maintained a low profile and, until recently, remained somewhat overlooked in the New York art scene. Pensato's pop culture subjects are psychologically charged and painted in an aggressively gestural fashion in mostly black, white and silver. "Hey Now" is one of Pensato's most recent works and appears to combine a cartoon dog's snout with the bushy eyebrows of Groucho Marx. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, owns similar paintings by Pensato, and others recently have been acquired by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Colby Museum of Art.

Photography

"Church Gate Station, Western Railroad Line, Bombay, India" (1995, printed 2012) by Sebastião Salgado is the proposed work for the High's photography collection. Salgado is among the most recognized documentary photographers of the 20th century, celebrated for his epic and compassionate depictions of the developing world, manual labor and populations in distress. "Church Gate Station" depicts a train depot in Mumbai, India. Commuters whirl around two docked locomotives in the jam-packed station, which itself is only one portal to a city of mesmerizing proportions. The picture points to the simultaneously exhilarating and frightening rate of growth in developing-world cities, a phenomenon that presents dramatic benefits and challenges for the future of humanity. The image was a seminal influence on the train scenes in Danny Boyle's Academy Award-winning film "Slumdog Millionaire."

About the High Museum of Art

Founded in 1905 as the Atlanta Art Association, the High Museum of Art is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 13,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the first major museum in North America to have a curatorial department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. In November 2005, the High opened three new buildings by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the Museum's size, creating a vibrant "village for the arts" at the Woodruff Arts Center in midtown Atlanta. For more information about the High, visit www.High.org.

About The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. The Woodruff is unique in that it combines four visual and performing arts divisions on one campus as one not-for-profit organization. Opened in 1968, the Woodruff Arts Center is home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art and Young Audiences. To learn more about the Woodruff Arts Center visit www.woodruffcenter.org.

###

DIGITAL IMAGES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Media contact:

Kristen Heflin
kristen.heflin@woodruffcenter.org
404-733-4423

Marci Tate
marci.tate@woodruffcenter.org
404-733-4585