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ART MUSEUM AT AMHERST COLLEGE ANNOUNCES FALL 2018 EXHIBITIONS

Three New Shows Feature New Acquisitions, the Depiction of Women Through the Ages And Around the World, and the Varied Expressions of Time Through Visual Art

Amherst, MA—On September 13, the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College will open three new exhibitions highlighting its growing collection, and the ways in which the Museum presents thematic exhibitions relevant to the lives of current Amherst students, faculty, and staff. ***Timing Is Everything*** is an exploration of artists' visualizations of concepts of time, from 17th Century European decorative arts to contemporary works such as Lorna Simpson's *Partitions and Time* (1997). ***Abstraction: New Acquisitions at the Mead*** includes eight works on paper by the artist Leon Polk Smith between 1944 and 1969 and recently acquired by the Museum. Finally, the second installation of ***Fragmented Identities: The Gendered Roles of Women in Art Through the Ages*** features 31 artworks examining the ways in which women have been depicted or have represented themselves across different media, centuries, and the globe. To celebrate the three exhibitions, the Museum will host an opening reception on September 13 from 5-7 p.m., which is free and open to the public.

"We are excited to welcome audiences this fall—especially our students, staff, and faculty—with three exhibitions that highlight the Museum's core collection strengths and our commitment to exploring previously untold narratives through art," said David E. Little, Director and Chief Curator of the Museum. "The themes of time and gender representation are relevant to contemporary audiences, made more so when we reconsider them across centuries and civilizations and bring historic perspectives into present-day focus. At the same time, we are thrilled to share some of the significant new works that have entered our collection, thanks to the generosity of our committed alums and other donors."

Timing Is Everything (September 13, 2018-February 17, 2019)

This wide-ranging exhibition explores how different artists and cultures express concepts of time through visual art—and how art has influenced our perceptions of the past, present, and future. The 81 works across a variety of media embrace many cultural perspectives on the subject of time, history, and memory: from Japan and Tibet, to the Congo and, Haiti, Latin America, and the United States and Europe.

For example, reflecting a concern about time's impact on the health of civilization are two paintings by Hudson River School artist Thomas Cole. In *The Past* (1838), the artist depicts a festive celebration on the grounds of a castle; in *The Present* (1838), Cole shows the castle as a sun-setted ruin, an allegory for societal decline. Chris Marker's classic 1962 short film *La Jetée*, picks up these themes of decline, with a narrative exploration of time-travel in a post-apocalyptic world in which the protagonist witnesses his own death. An early 20th century Congolese carved wooden "katatora," or divination tool, was used by local mystics to assess the challenges of a member of the community, whether seeking to learn from something hidden in their past or anticipate problems in the future.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum will host a series of programs during which the community can share their reflections on time—recognizing that the experience of time can be very personal and also communal. For example, the program "[*Queering Time*](#)," organized in honor of National Coming Out Day and in partnership with Amherst College's Queer Resource Center, will explore the concept of *chrononormativity*: the notion that the passing of time may feel different for people who

identify as LGBT. Throughout the fall, the Museum will also offer [improvisation](#) and [movement](#) workshops that will encourage participants to think about time from interdisciplinary perspectives. For the complete list of programs offered in conjunction with this exhibition, please check-out the [Mead's fall programming brochure](#). For visitors who want to share their own experiences of time, the Museum is creating a talk-back wall within the exhibition for these personal reflections, which will also be shared via the Museum's social media channels. The Mead asks visitors, "What is time?", "How do you perceive time?" and "When has time been a force in your life?" to showcase that time is not one-size-fits all.

This exhibition is curated by Miloslava Hrubá, Study Room Manager and European-Prints Specialist, and Vanja Malloy, Curator of American Art, with research support from the Mead's Education Department and Amherst College students Davis Brown '19, Tacia Diaz '19, and Julia Gill '20.

[Abstraction: New Acquisitions at the Mead](#) (September 13, 2018-February 17, 2019)

Since 2014, the Mead has acquired more than 700 works through gifts and purchases, spanning antiquity to the present day. This growth has been guided by the Museum's refreshed emphasis on connecting to the [educational mission](#) of Amherst College, and the importance of drawing on this collection to engage 21st century audiences.

One highlight of these acquisitions is a collection of eight works on paper by minimalist Leon Polk Smith (1906-1996), a gift spearheaded by curator and collector Brooke Kamin Rapaport '84, P'16. One of the works (*Untitled*, 1963) is a gift to the Mead from Rapaport and her husband, Richard; Rapaport was given the piece by the artist after she worked with him on an exhibition of his art at the Brooklyn Museum. A long-time supporter of the Mead and a founding member of its advisory board, Rapaport then helped spur a larger donation of seven additional artworks from the Leon Polk Smith Foundation. Together these works provide insight into 25 years of the artist's career—from 1944 to 1969—tracking aspects of the evolution of his process and approach.

Other acquisitions featured in the exhibition are:

- A work by Caio Fonseca, also donated by Brooke Rapaport '84, P'16
- *Small Mirage Series #255* (1992) by Larry Bell (American, b. 1939), a gift of Evan Maurer '66 in honor of classmate Dr. David J. Greenblatt
- A series of four sculptures by Ilya Bolotowsky (American, born in Russia, 1907-1981), donated by William W. Collins '53, Jack W.C. Hagstrom '55, and Richard S. Zeisler '37
- *Big Might* (2015) by Amanda Valdez (American, b. 1982), a work featured in the Museum's *Rotherwas Project No. 1* and given by the artist
- A print by Analía Sabán, selected by Amherst College students as part of the Collecting 101 Course, funded by the Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisition Fund in 2017.

This exhibition is curated by Vanja Malloy.

[Fragmented Identities: The Gendered Roles of Women in Art Through the Ages](#) (through February 17, 2019)

This exhibition brings together a wide range of works—from antiquity to the present—to draw critical attention to the way social and cultural constructs have shaped the depiction and self-representation of women through the ages and around the world. Drawn from the Museum's collection, the exhibition reveals recurring themes of representation, in which womanhood appears fragmented into slivers of socially constructed roles. Initially installed in 2018, *Fragmented Identities* has been refreshed with new works addressing additional perspectives, and works by non-white and non-western sources. These

changes are part of the Museum's ongoing commitment to collecting and presenting works that respond to the diversity of Amherst College, and the students' desire to see themselves reflected in the art on the Museum's walls.

As the exhibition demonstrates through its groupings, womanhood has been adapted through art to reflect a range of social expectations: women as mothers, as objects of beauty and desire, as manual workers, and even as allegorical symbols. For example, the two statuettes *Figurine of mother and child* (each c. 6th century) reflect the religious importance of women-as-mothers in a Pre-Columbian culture, much as Sano di Pietro's *Madonna and Child* (15th century) captures the maternal relationship at the heart of Christianity. By contrast, Victor Mignot's aquatint *The Cigarette* (after 1910) and Robert Mapplethorpe's photograph *Lisa Lyon* (1982) present women as objects of desire as well as of strength and independence.

Two of the works added to the exhibition were recently purchased by the Museum and selected by Amherst students as part of the Museum's Collecting 101 course, funded by the Trinkett Clark Memorial Student Acquisition Fund. Shivangi Ladha's mixed-media *Self Portrait* (2017) presents the artist's body in multiples, a metaphor for the multiple identities that she, and millions of women, must adopt in order to thrive. At the same time, it reflects the ways in which she believes patriarchal societies often view women: as indistinct multiples. Cedar Kirwin's lithograph *I Exist Between Every Line* (2017) challenges instinctive ideas about the female form, and how these assumptions can further fragment female identity.

The exhibition is curated by Vanja Malloy and Miloslava Hrubá.

About the Mead Art Museum

Situated in the vibrant Five Colleges academic community of western Massachusetts, the Mead Art Museum serves as a laboratory for interdisciplinary research and innovative teaching involving original works of art. An accredited member of the American Alliance of Museums, the Mead participates in Museums10, a regional cultural collaboration.

The museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. year-round, and until midnight on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday during the academic term.

Admission to the museum is free and open to the public. For more information, including a searchable catalogue of the collection and a complete schedule of exhibitions and events, visit amherst.edu/mead or call (413) 542-2335.