

Artist Paul Ramírez Jonas Joins Joan Mitchell Foundation Board

NEW YORK, NY—February 19, 2020—The Joan Mitchell Foundation announced today that artist and educator Paul Ramírez Jonas has been appointed to its Board of Directors for a three-year term. Over the last twenty-five years, Ramírez Jonas has created works that range from large-scale public installations and monumental sculptures to performances, videos, and intimate drawings. Underlying his diverse practice is a vision to redefine the relationship between artist, artwork, and viewer, and his works and installations often encourage public participation and exchange. In addition to his artistic practice, Ramírez Jonas serves as an Associate Professor at Hunter College in New York. In 2008, he was the recipient of a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant.

“As an artist dedicated to social practice and to promoting the importance of creativity in our lives, Paul brings an important vantage and a shared commitment to equity and generosity—both core to the Foundation’s work and vision. His connection with young people, through his work as an educator, also enhances our understanding of the needs and aspirations of the future generation of artists,” said Christa Blatchford, the CEO of the Joan Mitchell Foundation. “As an artist-centered Foundation, the perspectives of working artists are essential to shaping our priorities. Our board composition ensures that at least one third of the members are artists. We’re delighted to have Paul’s voice at the table.”

From the outset of his career in 1989, Ramírez Jonas has seen himself as a reader and interpreter of objects, texts, and histories, creating new physical and conceptual forms that connect his source materials with his own vision and experience. In the mid-2000s, he began expanding his practice to connect more directly with the viewer, centering the public in the development and experience of his work. His 2017 project, *Public Trust*, which was recognized as an outstanding public art project by Americans for the Arts, invited individuals to declare and record personal promises as an exploration of communal commitment. His 2010 Creative Time project, *Key to the City*, involved 20,000 participants and centered around a key as a vehicle for exploring social contracts pertaining to trust, access, and belonging.

In addition to conceiving public projects, Ramírez Jonas has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions at venues including, Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2018); The New Museum New York, (2017); the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT (2008); the Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, TX (2007); and the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham, UK (2004). In 2017, the Contemporary Art Museum Houston hosted a 25-year career survey of his work, titled *Atlas, Pural, Monumental*. His work has also been presented in major group exhibitions, such as *Crossing Brooklyn* at the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY, and *Under the Same Sun* at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2014), as well as at biennials in Central America

(2016), Porto Alegre (2009 and 2012), Venice (2009), Shanghai (2006), Seoul (2000), and Johannesburg (1995).

In addition to the Joan Mitchell Foundation, he sits on the board of Shandaken Project. He is represented by Galeria Nara Roesler in São Paulo and New York City.

“The Joan Mitchell Foundation is an essential model for our cultural ecosystem: a foundation created by an artist for artists and one that is committed to diversity and equity in both its internal operations and public work. At a time when artists find themselves navigating a shrinking public sector, an unregulated market, and often narrowly-focused philanthropic initiatives, the foundation offers an alternative approach that centers and offers support for the real-life needs of artists. I feel honored to be able to serve in such a unique institution,” said Ramírez Jonas.

Members of the Board of Directors of the Joan Mitchell Foundation serve three-year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive terms. The current Board members include Ronald Bechet, President; Jean Shin, Vice-President; Juan Sánchez, Secretary; Sandy S. Lee, Treasurer; Theodore S. Berger; Kemi Ilesanmi; Miranda Lash; Michele Tortorelli; and Linda Usdin, Dr.PH.

Additionally, the Board has seven Emeritus members: Alejandro Anreus, PhD, Board President Emeritus; Dan Bergman, Board President Emeritus; Tomie Arai, Director Emeritus; John Koos, Director Emeritus; Tyrone Mitchell, Director Emeritus; Yolanda Shashaty, Director Emeritus; and Carolyn Somers, Founding Member & Executive Director Emeritus. All were appointed to Emeritus status in recognition of their many years of service and commitment to the Foundation.

About the Joan Mitchell Foundation

The Joan Mitchell Foundation celebrates the life of abstract artist Joan Mitchell by expanding awareness of her pioneering work and fulfilling her wish to support and provide opportunities for visual artists. Through grants, residencies, and related initiatives, the Foundation advances the work of today’s artists and amplifies their essential contributions to communities around the world.

As the chief steward of Joan Mitchell’s legacy, the Foundation manages a collection of Mitchell’s artwork and archives containing her personal papers, photographs, and ephemera. The Foundation provides loans of Mitchell artworks from its collection to museums, academic institutions, and other non-profit arts spaces. Foundation staff are dedicated to assisting researchers and sharing information about the Foundation’s artwork and archival collections in order to further scholarship and broad appreciation for Mitchell’s life and work. The Foundation

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is also supporting the Joan Mitchell Catalogue Raisonné, established in 2015, which is currently researching Mitchell's paintings in order to produce a scholarly, multi-volume book documenting all of the artist's known painted work.

Fulfilling Mitchell's mandate to "aid and assist" living artists, over the past 27 years the Foundation has evolved a range of initiatives that directly support visual artists at varying stages of their careers. The Foundation's grant programs include the annual Painters & Sculptors Grants, which provide 25 artists with unrestricted funds of \$25,000, and Emergency Grants of up to \$6,000 for disaster recovery. The New Orleans-based Joan Mitchell Center hosts residencies for national and local artists, as well as artist talks, open studio events, and other public programs that encourage dialogue and exchange with the local community. The Creating a Living Legacy (CALL) initiative provides free and essential resources to help artists of all ages organize, document, and manage their artworks and careers. Together, these programs, along with additional professional support services, actively engage with working artists as they develop and expand their practices.

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