

For Immediate Release:

CENTER FOR CURATORIAL LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCES ITS CLASS OF 2009

Selection of New Fellows Builds Upon Success of Inaugural Year Program, Professional Advancement of the Class of 2008

New York, NY, October 30, 2008 – Ten outstanding curators from art museums and institutions across the United States have been selected to participate in the 2009 fellowship program of the Center for Curatorial Leadership (CCL), an organization that trains curators for leadership positions.

CCL is founded on the belief that curatorial knowledge and expertise are fundamental to art museums and ought to be at the heart of museum leadership. In a widely heralded decision, The Metropolitan Museum of Art recently endorsed this principle by its appointment of curator Thomas P. Campbell to be its next director. With many other museums throughout the United States currently seeking directors, the CCL program makes a vital contribution toward ensuring that curators have the administrative and managerial skills to lead institutions.

Selected by a panel of leading museum directors, the Class of 2009 will begin the program on January 5, 2009, with instruction by Graduate School of Business at Columbia University and top museum directors, administrators and trustees from around the country. All costs are fully funded by CCL. The fellows for 2009 are:

[Valerie Cassel Oliver](#), Curator
Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston

[Gloria Groom](#), David and Mary Winton Green Curator of 19th Century European Painting
Art Institute of Chicago

[Maxwell Hearn](#), Douglas Dillon Curator, Department of Asian Art
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

[Robin Held](#), Chief Curator and Director of Exhibitions and Collections
Frye Art Museum, Seattle

[Eik Kahng](#), Curator and Head of the Department of 18th and 19th Century Art
Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

[Mary-Kay Lombino](#), The Emily Hargroves Fisher '57 and Richard B. Fisher Curator
Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie

[Kevin Salatino](#), Curator and Department Head, Prints and Drawings
Los Angeles County Museum of Art

[Britt Salvesen](#), Director and Chief Curator
Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson

Rochelle Steiner, Director
Public Art Fund, New York

Matthew Welch, Assistant Director for Curatorial Affairs, Curator of Japanese and Korean Art
Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Co-founded by Agnes Gund, President Emerita of The Museum of Modern Art, and Elizabeth Easton, the former chair of the Department of European Painting at the Brooklyn Museum, the Center for Curatorial Leadership welcomed its first class of fellows in 2008. Agnes Gund has made a commitment to see the program through its first five years, and Eugene Thaw has pledged a three-year contribution through the Thaw Charitable Trust.

“The members of the Class of 2009 exemplify the high values and priceless abilities of the finest curators across the United States,” Agnes Gund stated. “They are already leaders in their own fields. With CCL’s help, they will prove their capacity for leadership across the board.”

Commenting on the success of CCL’s inaugural year, Elizabeth Easton stated, “The 2008 pilot program galvanized an interest throughout the field in the professional development of curators, raising awareness that curatorial leadership at the highest level of museums is not only possible but desirable. Indeed, CCL already has been approached by other cultural institutions that are interested in using its program as a model. Members of the Class of 2008 have enjoyed promotions and assumed new roles, demonstrating CCL’s short-term success. The goal, however, is to have a long-term impact, not just on isolated museums but on the entire field.”

Advisory Committee

Aiding CCL in its work is a distinguished Advisory Committee, comprised of many leading museum directors and trustees from the United States and abroad. Members of the Advisory Committee include Agnes Gund, President Emerita, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; William Griswold, Director, Morgan Library and Museum, New York; Kathy Halbreich, Associate Director, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Philippe de Montebello, Director, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Timothy Potts, Director, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Kimerly Rorschach, Director, Nasher Museum at Duke University, North Carolina; Axel Rüger, Director, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam; Rt. Hon. Lord Smith of Finsbury, former Secretary of Culture for the United Kingdom and Director of the Clore Leadership Programme, London; Ann Tenenbaum, Trustee, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Studio Museum, Harlem, New York; Susana Torruela-Leval, Director Emerita, El Museo del Barrio, New York; and Darren Walker, Vice President, Foundation Initiatives, The Rockefeller Foundation, New York.

CCL Curriculum

The fundamental purpose of the CCL curriculum was articulated several years ago by Philippe de Montebello, when addressing the then-nascent Association of Art Museum Curators: “It is essential to enlarge the pool of curators with the qualifications to be tomorrow’s museum directors...[and] to reassure trustees that hiring curators as directors will not compromise the business-like running of a museum’s affairs, in other words, their bottom line. Whether this is achieved through more exposure of curators to the functioning of the administration from within, or more schooling in business administration...it is absolutely critical that more should be done in broadening the professional development of curators.”

With this as the goal, the 2009 fellows of the Center for Curatorial Leadership will begin their studies on January 5, 2009, with a two-week intensive program at Columbia University in New York, including instruction from senior professors at the Graduate School of Business and from museum directors, administrators and trustees from around the country. Topics for study will include change management, decision making, strategy, negotiation and conflict resolution, finance, managerial accounting and endowment management. From the beginning of the curriculum to the conclusion, each fellow will be matched with an individual mentor.

This initial session will be followed in spring 2009 by a one-week residency at a major museum different from each curator's home institution. The program will conclude with a final week of study in June, concentrating on the investigation of core values and how these can be embodied within an institutional framework. Finally, the curators will be assigned long-term team projects devoted to subjects of importance to the profession. These papers will be presented to the public and distributed to the entire museum network.

In addition to participating in the intensive study program, the CCL fellows will join in executive leadership seminars in which directors, trustees and curators come together to share information about the issues currently facing the museum world.

Members of the Class of 2009 will receive a certificate from the Center for Curatorial Leadership upon successful completion of the program. By providing certification, CCL aspires in the future to act as an unofficial clearinghouse and resource for institutions seeking directors.

About the Director

Elizabeth Easton earned her Ph.D. at Yale University, writing her dissertation on Edouard Vuillard's interiors of the 1890s. She joined the Brooklyn Museum in 1988 as Assistant Curator and became Chair of the Department of European Painting and Sculpture in 1999. During her tenure, she was the curator for numerous exhibitions, including *The Intimate Eye of Edouard Vuillard*; *Frédéric Bazille: Prophet of Impressionism*; *Monet and the Mediterranean*; *Brooklyn Collects*; and many others.

She has written numerous articles and essays for exhibition catalogues and a variety of art journals. Ms. Easton has also given lectures across the country and abroad on such topics as "Degas and the Artist as Frame Designer" and "Transcending the Easel: Vuillard and Photography," which explore new areas of art historical inquiry. Ms. Easton is an adjunct professor at New York University, teaching a senior seminar on museums in the Art History Department. Among the many academic honors she has received, Ms. Easton was awarded a Fulbright and two Andrew W. Mellon fellowships and was recently awarded a decoration of Chevalier des Arts et Lettres by the French government.

She was the first elected president of the Association of Art Museum Curators (2003 – 2006), a national organization of over 750 curators from 220 museums. In this capacity she launched an inquiry into the professional development of curators, which led to the creation of the Center for Curatorial Leadership in 2007. She has served as a trustee of the Town School, the Spence School, Studio in a School, and on the advisory boards of a number of other cultural institutions.

Additional information can be found at www.curatorialleadership.org.

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