



PRESS RELEASE

Minneapolis Institute of Art Appoints Robert Cozzolino as Curator of Paintings

Elizabeth MacMillan Establishes New Endowment for Paintings Chair

Minneapolis, MN, November 2, 2015—The Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) today announced the appointment of Robert (Bob) Cozzolino as its new Patrick and Aimee Butler Curator of Paintings. Dr. Cozzolino comes to Mia from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia (PAFA) where he has worked since 2004, and is currently Senior Curator and Evelyn and Will Kaplan Curator of Modern Art. He assumes his position at Mia on March 1, 2016. Patrick Noon who currently holds the title and is chair of the paintings department will assume a new title, the Elizabeth MacMillan Chair of Paintings. Mrs. MacMillan, a Mia supporter and former trustee (2009-2014), has recently and generously endowed the chairmanship.

“We are so pleased to have Bob join our excellent team of curators here at Mia. His experience at PAFA and his extensive knowledge of American painting will be a particular asset as we think about new ways to interpret and share our outstanding collection with the public,” said Kaywin Feldman, Mia’s Duncan and Nivan MacMillan Director and President. “As part of Mia’s birthday year, we have put a special emphasis on long-term support for our curators and enduring stewardship of our nationally-recognized permanent collections. Betty MacMillan, a supporter for many years, could not have helped us celebrate in a more meaningful way. I wish to thank her for this generous gift, which will ensure that Mia will be able forevermore to attract the best curators to research and grow the museum’s renowned collection of paintings.”

Dr. Cozzolino has been called the “curator of the dispossessed” for his championship of underrepresented artists and uncommon perspectives on well-known artists. At PAFA he curated over thirty exhibitions including retrospectives of Elizabeth Osborne, George Tooker, and Peter Blume. He is currently working on the first comprehensive exhibition to explore the impact of World War I on American artists, which will open at PAFA in November 2016.

While Dr. Cozzolino’s writing and curatorial projects have focused on 20th-century art, he has worked with many contemporary artists including Sue Coe, Vik Muniz, and Peter Saul. In 2014 he collaborated with David Lynch to organize the largest ever American museum exhibition of his visual art and subsequently acquired Lynch’s first piece incorporating film – *Six Men Getting Sick*

(1967) for PAFA. For a wide-ranging 2010 exhibition of artists' portraits and self-portraits he enabled PAFA students to make self-portraits in a public studio within the exhibition. Interdisciplinary collaboration has been an important part of his curatorial practice, whether across historical periods, with colleagues in the sciences, or in film. He also worked extensively with PAFA's permanent collection, reinstalling and reinterpreting it while purchasing major works by Gertrude Abercrombie, Roger Brown, Philip Evergood, Jared French, Adolph Gottlieb, Jacob Lawrence, Norman Lewis, Louis Lozowick, Jim Nutt, Nancy Spero, and Dorothea Tanning.

Dr. Cozzolino brought in over 1,000 objects as gifts to PAFA, including The Linda Lee Alter Collection of Art by Women which debuted at PAFA in the 2012 exhibition *The Female Gaze: Women Artists Making Their World*. PAFA's first works by Louise Bourgeois, Joan Brown, Viola Frey, Miriam Schapiro and others came in this nearly 500-object donation. His dedication to increasing the representation of women in PAFA's collection preceded and has continued after that transformative gift.

"It's a pleasure to welcome a talented colleague like Bob to our Paintings department", said Patrick Noon. "Bob's expertise in the field of American art perfectly complements the strengths of our collection and I look forward to working with him."

"My time at PAFA and in Philadelphia, which has a vibrant and supportive arts community, has been truly wonderful," Dr. Cozzolino noted. "However, I am thrilled to return to the Midwest where I grew up and to collaborate with my new colleagues at Mia. I look forward to emphasizing American art's connections within Mia's wider collection, and finding connections for Minneapolis's diverse and engaged community. I feel fortunate to be leaving one great museum for another."

Dr. Cozzolino was born, raised, and studied in the Midwest. A native of Chicago, he earned his Ph.D from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a dissertation on Ivan Albright. In his work on American art he has emphasized regional diversity, integrating artists of Chicago, Wisconsin, California, and other areas into installations, thematic exhibitions and his scholarship. He has emphasized alternative traditions in American art and in Modernism, an approach he will continue at Mia. Dr. Cozzolino is also a percussionist and has played free-improvised music in Chicago, Madison, and Philadelphia. He hopes to find like-minded musicians in the Twin Cities.

PRESS CONTACTS:

Minneapolis Institute of Art

Anne-Marie Wagener, (612) 870-3280; awagener@artsmia.org

Tammy Pleshek, (612) 870-3171; tpleshek@artsmia.org

ABOUT THE MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ART

Home to over 89,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) inspires wonder, spurs creativity, and nourishes the imagination. With extraordinary exhibitions and one of the finest wide-ranging art collections in the country—Rembrandt to van Gogh, Monet to Matisse, Asian to African—Mia links the past to the present, enables global conversations, and offers an exceptional setting for inspiration.

General admission to Mia is always free. Some special exhibitions have a nominal admission fee.

Museum hours: Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.; Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Thursday and Friday 10 a.m.–9 p.m.; Monday closed. For more information, call (612) 870-3000 or visit artsmia.org.