



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FIVE MAJOR AMERICAN MUSEUMS SELECTED TO LAUNCH NATIONAL ANDREW W. MELLON UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM FOR CURATORIAL TRAINING

The Art Institute of Chicago, the High Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston (MFAH), and The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art are pleased to announce the launch of The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship Program, which provides specialized training in the curatorial field for students across the United States from diverse backgrounds. This initiative is generously supported by a grant of \$2,073,000 from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. A National Fellowship Coordinator based at LACMA, the institution to which the grant was made, will work with regional coordinators to execute the program across all of the museums.

The fellowship seeks to make a critical impact on American art museums by developing gifted curators who are committed to engaging with the full spectrum of museum audiences. Fellows will participate in The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship Program throughout their undergraduate career, with the goal of continuing their education through graduate work.

Twenty students nationwide will be selected for this intensive program following Summer Academies at each museum over the course of the grant period. The Summer Academy is a one-week intensive program consisting of workshops, tours, field trips and networking events with museum professionals. They will be offered in summer 2014 and summer 2015 at each partnering museum. This program is open to freshmen and sophomore students, enrolled in undergraduate programs located near the partner museums, representing historically underrepresented groups in the curatorial field or who support the goal of promoting inclusive, pluralistic museums.

Douglas Druick, President and Eloise W. Martin Director at the Art Institute of Chicago, said, "We are grateful to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for funding such a visionary program that will provide students with meaningful formal experience in curatorial endeavors, mentoring, and exposure to professionals across wide areas of expertise, including conservation, education, and digital access. This initiative is critical to the vitality of museums and museum leadership around the country, and I look forward to supporting and encouraging young scholars here in Chicago as the program unfolds."

"We are honored and excited to participate in this important initiative and to help foster future leaders and diversity in the curatorial field," said Michael E. Shapiro, Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr. director of the High. "This program offers the very special opportunity for undergraduate students to gain a true understanding of how museums work and for art institutions to become more inclusive and representative of the communities they serve."

“We believe The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship will have a lasting impact on the next generation of curators,” said Michael Govan, LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director. “We are pleased to partner with our colleagues on this important initiative. We thank the Mellon Foundation for their generous support and applaud their tremendous dedication to pioneering programs such as this.”

“Demographers have determined that Houston has the most diverse population of any American metropolis,” commented Gary Tinterow, MFAH Director. “Crucially, this initiative will enable us to educate and mentor a new and more diverse generation of museum professionals, one that truly reflects the changing face of our country.”

Julián Zugazagoitia, CEO & Director of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, remarked, “I am very proud that the Nelson-Atkins is part of The Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellowship in partnership. We live in the heart of the United States at a crossroads of diverse cultures and perspectives. We have a tremendously talented team of curators and staff excited about helping students shape their future and the rich varied future of our field.”

Selected fellows will participate in a multiyear program that provides hands-on experience inside a museum setting, such as working with curators and staff on exhibitions, collections, and programs. Designed as a series of ongoing summer internships at the museum, followed by continued engagement during the academic school year, fellows are provided a stipend and are assigned museum mentors. Mentors will work with students to enrich the academic experience and to increase exposure to the museum context while broadening their understanding of art and art history.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About the Art Institute of Chicago

The Art Institute of Chicago is a world-renowned art museum housing one of the largest permanent collections in the United States. An encyclopedic museum, the Art Institute collects, preserves, and displays works in every medium from all cultures and historical periods as well as hosts special exhibitions. With a collection of more than 260,000 art works and artifacts, the museum has particularly strong holdings in Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting, early 20th century European painting and sculpture, contemporary art, Japanese prints, and photography. The museum's 2009 addition, the Modern Wing, features the latest in green museum technology and 264,000 square feet dedicated to modern and contemporary art, photography, architecture and design, and new museum education

facilities. In addition to displaying its permanent collection, the Art Institute mounts approximately 40 special exhibitions per year and features lectures, gallery tours, and special performances on a daily basis.

Location and Contact: 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603 | (312) 443-3600 | www.artic.edu

About the High Museum of Art

The High is the leading art museum in the southeastern U.S. 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. This year, the High celebrates the 30th anniversary of the Stent Family Wing, designed by architect Richard Meier.

Location and Contact: 1280 Peachtree Street, N.E., Atlanta, GA 30309 | (404) 733-4400 | www.high.org

About the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)

Since its inception in 1965, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography, in addition to representing Los Angeles's uniquely diverse population.

Today LACMA is the largest art museum in the western United States, with a collection that includes over 120,000 objects dating from antiquity to the present, encompassing the geographic world and nearly the entire history of art. Among the museum's strengths are its holdings of Asian art, Latin American art, ranging from pre-Columbian masterpieces to works by leading modern and contemporary artists; and Islamic art, of which LACMA hosts one of the most significant collections in the world. A museum of international stature as well as a vital part of Southern California, LACMA shares its vast collections through exhibitions, public programs, and research facilities that attract over a million visitors annually, in addition to serving millions through digital initiatives, such as online collections, scholarly catalogues, and interactive engagement at lacma.org. Situated in Hancock Park on over 20 acres in the heart of Los Angeles, LACMA is located between the ocean and downtown.

Location and Contact: 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036 | (323) 857-6000 | www.lacma.org

About The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH)

Founded in 1900, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, is among the 10 largest art museums in the United States. Located in the heart of Houston's Museum District, the MFAH comprises two gallery buildings, a sculpture garden, theater, two art schools and two libraries, with two house museums, for American and European decorative arts, nearby. The encyclopedic collection of the MFAH numbers some 65,000 works and spans the art of antiquity to the present.

Location and Contact: 1001 Bissonnet, Houston, TX 77005 | (713) 639-7300 | www.mfah.org

About The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

The Nelson-Atkins in Kansas City is recognized nationally and internationally as one of America's finest art museums. The Nelson-Atkins serves the community by providing access and insight into its renowned collection of more than 33,500 art objects and is best known for its Asian art, European and American paintings, photography, modern sculpture, and new American Indian and Egyptian galleries. Housing a major art research library and the Ford Learning Center, the Museum is a key educational resource for the region. The institution-wide transformation of the Nelson-Atkins has included the 165,000-square-foot Bloch Building expansion and renovation of the original 1933 Nelson-Atkins Building. The Nelson-Atkins is committed to connecting people of all ages with meaningful art experiences.

Through its partnerships with Kansas City community, civic, and cultural organizations and the national and international arts community, The Nelson-Atkins welcomes and engages the diverse population of Kansas City and the surrounding region with enriching exhibitions, cultural programs, and educational activities.

Location and Contact: 4525 Oak Street, Kansas City, MO 64111 | (816) 751-1278 | www.nelson-atkins.org

About The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation currently makes grants in four core program areas: Higher Education and Scholarship; Scholarly Communications and Information Technology; Art History, Conservation, and Museums; Performing Arts. Within each of its core programs, the Foundation concentrates most of its grantmaking in a few areas. Institutions and programs receiving support are often leaders in fields of Foundation activity, but they may also be promising newcomers, or in a position to demonstrate new ways of overcoming obstacles to achieve program goals. Our grantmaking philosophy is to build, strengthen and sustain institutions and their core capacities, rather than be a source for narrowly defined projects. As such, we develop thoughtful, long-term collaborations with grant recipients and invest sufficient funds for an extended period to accomplish the purpose at hand and achieve meaningful results.