

# GUGGENHEIM

Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

EXNEWS RELEASE

## GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM APPOINTS JEFFREY WEISS AS CURATOR, PANZA COLLECTION

**Appointment Launches the Panza Collection Initiative, a Comprehensive Evaluation of Minimalist, Post-Minimalist, and Conceptual Works from the 1960s through the 1970s in the Guggenheim's Panza Collection**

(NEW YORK, NY – May 21, 2010) — Richard Armstrong, Director, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and Museum, today announced the appointment of Jeffrey Weiss to the newly established position of Curator, Panza Collection. The creation of the position is part of the Panza Collection Initiative (PCI), which was announced last month along with a major grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation of \$1.23 million to support the first phase of this project. This phase will undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the Minimalist, Post-Minimalist, and Conceptual artworks, from the 1960s through the 1970s, in the Guggenheim's Panza Collection.

“We are enormously pleased that Jeffrey Weiss will join the Guggenheim as the first Panza Curator,” said Mr. Armstrong. “Jeffrey’s experience and stature as a curator and scholar, and his expertise in Minimalist and Post-Minimalist art makes this a particularly meaningful union. Jeffrey will help lead a team of curators, conservators, and scientists that will undertake an interdisciplinary study and dialogue as part of what is envisioned as a long-term plan of action to address all works in the Panza Collection.” Mr. Armstrong continued, “Many of the works in the collection, particularly those by Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, and Bruce Nauman, are ephemeral, thus posing unique challenges to curators and conservators who strive to accurately exhibit and sustain the work for generations to come.”

The PCI was conceived by Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation Deputy Director and Chief Curator Nancy Spector and Deputy Director and Chief Conservator Carol Stringari, who will remain integral to and head the project. “The Panza Collection provides a critical opportunity to explore the shifting views on preserving works that have multiple historical iterations or that can be refabricated; this inevitably raises trenchant museological issues involving institutional responsibility, collection management policies, market pressures, and artists’ rights,” they said.

“The Panza Collection Initiative is a remarkable opportunity to push our collective conversation about Minimalist and Post-Minimalist art in new directions,” said Mr. Weiss. “Everything about it falls at the center of my own recent interests as a curator and scholar. I am thrilled to be collaborating on this project with my colleagues at the museum.”

As part of the Panza Collection Initiative, Mr. Armstrong announced the appointment of Ted Mann as Assistant Curator, Panza Collection, and also announced the newly created position of Panza Conservator, which will be filled in the near future.

During the first phase of the project, case studies will be constructed around the work of four artists in the Guggenheim’s Panza Collection: Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Bruce Nauman, and Lawrence Weiner. This process will entail exhaustive research on the history and fabrication of the works, as well as extensive interviews with artists (or their estates) and former studio assistants, along with curators and conservators with related expertise. The goal is to assemble comprehensive information regarding the artists’ practices, with particular attention paid to the production and installation of works. Specific artworks from the Panza Collection will then be assembled and studied with help from a special Advisory Committee, promoting an exchange that will contribute toward the establishment of standards that will influence interpretation and long-term preservation.

Before joining the Guggenheim Museum, Mr. Weiss was an independent curator and critic based in New York. Between 2000 and 2007, he was Curator and Head of Modern and Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. From 2007 to 2008, he served as Director of the Dia Art Foundation, New York, but left to return to academic and curatorial work. Since that time he has been teaching at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University’s graduate school of art history, where he will retain his position as Adjunct Professor of Fine Art. Mr. Weiss has organized exhibitions on Jasper Johns, Pablo Picasso, and Mark Rothko, and has contributed to and edited catalogues for those projects. At the National Gallery, Mr. Weiss also built significant museum holdings of 1960s and 1970s artwork. He was also the editor of *Dan Flavin: New Light*, a 2006 anthology of essays from Yale University Press. Widely published in various periodicals on modern and postwar art, Mr. Weiss’s writings are also regularly featured in *Artforum*. He is currently at work on a complete catalogue of the early object sculptures of Robert Morris and on *Material Uncanny*, a book concerning various topics in Minimalist and Post-Minimalist art. Mr. Weiss holds a Ph.D. from the Institute of Fine Arts.

From 2001 to 2008, Mr. Mann held various positions at the Guggenheim Museum, most recently that of Assistant Curator for Collections, a position in which he was responsible for curating collection exhibitions and researching and writing about the permanent collection for exhibition catalogues, Guggenheim.org, and other museum publications. Exhibitions to which Mr. Mann contributed include: *The Shapes of Space* (Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 2007); *Passages: Beuys, Darboven, Kiefer, Richter* (Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, 2006–07); *Marc Chagall: Selections from the Collection* (Guggenheim Museum, 2005–06); and *Singular Forms (Sometimes Repeated): Art from 1951 to the Present* (Guggenheim Museum, 2004). At the Guggenheim Museum, Mr. Mann also published essays for a variety of exhibition catalogues. Since 2008 he has been pursuing his Ph.D. at the Institute of Fine Arts.

Mr. Weiss will begin work in August and Mr. Mann in early June.

### **The Panza Collection Initiative (PCI)**

From 1991 to 1992, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation acquired 357 works from the world-renowned collection of Giuseppe Panza di Biumo (who died earlier this year), including seminal Minimalist sculptures by artists such as Carl Andre, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, and Robert Morris; equally strong examples of Minimalist paintings by Robert Mangold, Brice Marden, and Robert Ryman; and an in-depth selection of Post-Minimalist, Conceptual, and Environmental art by Hanne Darboven, Robert Irwin, Bruce Nauman, Maria Nordman, Richard Serra, James Turrell, and Lawrence Weiner, among others. With this unprecedented acquisition in place, the Guggenheim Museum is forging a leadership role in the study, display, and preservation of American art from the 1960s and 1970s.

The Panza Conservation Initiative was conceived to ensure that Minimalist, Post-Minimalist, and Conceptual artworks of this era are thoroughly researched, preserved, and presented to the public in a manner sensitive to their historical context and material integrity. The goal of the Panza Collection Initiative will be to create a framework for the sustainability of countless other variable or ephemeral artworks (or works that can be refabricated) from the 1960s and 1970s in public collections in the United States and around the world.

The first phase of the PCCI will be organized around a series of four case studies focusing on the work of Flavin, Judd, Nauman, and Weiner. The case studies will use actual objects (and those that exist only in certificate form) to guide all research and analysis. Led by Nancy Spector, Deputy Director and Chief Curator, and Carol Stringari, Deputy Director and Chief Conservator, the project will be undertaken by Curator Jeffrey Weiss, Curatorial Associate Ted Mann, and a to-be-named conservator, along with scientific consultants, and will be guided by a cross-disciplinary Advisory Committee comprising experts on Minimalism, Post-Minimalism, and Conceptual art in general and the four artists' work in particular.

The information gathered from documentary research, preliminary interviews, and examination of the works will be presented to an Advisory Committee comprised of curators from museums with comparable collections of art from the 1960s and 1970s; art historians who have researched and published extensively on Minimalism, Post-Minimalism, or Conceptual art; conservators who have researched and treated works from this period; theorists involved with the Variable Media Initiative; representatives of artists' foundations and estates; and attorneys familiar with traditional property rights, intellectual property law, and the Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990.

The Advisory Committee will encompass many viewpoints and represent the interests of scholars and professionals in multiple disciplines, such as art, art history, philosophy, law, science, and conservation. As several members of the committee represent other cultural institutions with similar collections, they are facing comparable issues of preservation and display. The Guggenheim Museum project team will consult with the members of the Advisory Committee on a regular basis through online forums and periodic seminars with subsets of the larger panel.

The primary goal of the project is to share expertise and reach consensus that will establish parameters for interpreting, installing, exhibiting, and preserving work that can be refabricated, and to establish norms for dealing with these works when materials become unavailable. In the case of contested works, the aim is to define their historical importance and ultimate fate. The essential goal is the preservation of the collection and the collaborative exchange of information among the immediate stakeholders and the cultural community at large.

**About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation**

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. Currently the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation owns and operates the Guggenheim Museum on Fifth Avenue in New York and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection on the Grand Canal in Venice, and also provides programming and management for two other museums in Europe that bear its name: the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao and the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin. The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, a museum of modern and contemporary art designed by architect Frank Gehry, is scheduled to open in 2013.

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

Betsy Ennis, Director of Media & Public Relations

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

212 423 3840

[pressoffice@guggenheim.org](mailto:pressoffice@guggenheim.org)