

# GUGGENHEIM

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Guggenheim Museum Launches New Social Practice Art Initiative with Major Grant from the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation**

#### **Commissioned Projects by Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Jon Rubin, and Lenka Clayton to Focus on Community Engagement**

(NEW YORK, NY—May 12, 2016)—The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum has received a major grant from the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation to support Guggenheim Social Practice, a new initiative committed to exploring the ways in which artists can initiate projects that engage community participants, together with the museum, to foster new forms of public engagement. As part of the initiative, the museum will commission two separate artist projects, one by Marc Bamuthi Joseph and one by Jon Rubin and Lenka Clayton, which will be developed and presented in New York City in 2016 and 2017, respectively.

The Guggenheim Social Practice artists were selected based on an in-depth review of their impact within the field of socially engaged art, as well as their ability to positively connect with members of the public as collaborators and/or cocreators. The artists are currently working with the Guggenheim to refine their projects. The first of these by Joseph is titled *moving and passing* and will take place in June 2016.

Produced to coincide with Joseph's forthcoming premiere */peh-LO-tah/* at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, *moving and passing* examines the cultural complexities of soccer, including ways in which the global sport may be used to connect young people with the arts and bring awareness to issues facing immigrant communities. Joseph will work with New York City youth in soccer clinics and writing workshops, stimulating discussions around global economies and sports as politics. Spoken word poems and storytelling will form the basis of a theatrical experience featuring live music and choreography inspired by South African and Brazilian dance and the quick footwork necessary in soccer.

Joseph commented, "These are politically volatile and ecologically urgent times that demand a deeper level of civic accountability for both artists and arts institutions. I've been a lifelong admirer of the Guggenheim and I feel both humbled and emboldened to be included in their vision of socially integrated creative partnerships. My hope is that our project will lay the foundation for other models of

kinesthetic learning and make more visible the link between aesthetics and athletics in the social realm.”

The second Guggenheim Social Practice project, expected to launch in spring 2017, is currently being developed by interdisciplinary artists Jon Rubin and Lenka Clayton. Rubin’s ongoing collaboration with Dawn Weleski in Pittsburgh, *Conflict Kitchen*, serves food from countries in conflicts with the United States, encouraging public engagement with the culture, politics, and issues at stake within the highlighted regions. Clayton is founder of An Artist Residency in Motherhood, which challenges the traditional artist residency and confronts the impact and reality of motherhood on her practice.

Guggenheim Social Practice is organized by curatorial and education staff from the Guggenheim, including Kim Kanatani, Deputy Director and Gail Engelberg Director of Education; Nat Trotman, Curator, Performance and Media; Sharon Vatsky, Director of Education, School and Family Programs; Christina Yang, Director of Education, Public Programs; and Joan Young, Director of Curatorial Affairs.

A key component of the initiative will be an impact analysis to be conducted by the museum throughout the duration of the program to assess the effect of social practice art on participating communities, artists, and the institution.

Kanatani remarked, “My colleagues and I are honored to collaborate with Marc, Jon, and Lenka on the two public engagement projects commissioned through Guggenheim Social Practice. Our ongoing collaboration with these three remarkable artists is shifting our ideas of the internal structure of a museum, and expanding our thinking about the traditional exchange between the institution and the public it serves through involvement with participatory, socially based work. It is with great thanks to the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation that we’re able to pilot this initiative, readjust museum conventions, and ultimately share our findings with partners in the field.”

Firoz Ladak, CEO of the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation, announced on behalf of the foundation, “I am thrilled that the Guggenheim and the Edmond de Rothschild Foundation have joined forces to develop this unprecedented project, which is being entrusted to three outstanding artists. We’re eager to watch as the initiative unfolds and believe that the participatory nature of each work will transcend traditional boundaries and demonstrate the power of community engagement in the arts.”

## **About the Artists**

### **Marc Bamuthi Joseph**

Marc Bamuthi Joseph is an inaugural recipient of the United States Artists Rockefeller Fellowship, the winner of the 2011 Herb Alpert Award in Theatre, and an inaugural recipient of the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award. He is the founding Program Director of the nonprofit Youth Speaks, and is a cofounder of Life is Living, a national series of one-day festivals designed to activate under-resourced parks through hip hop arts and focused environmental action. Joseph recently premiered the Creative Time commission *Black Joy in the Hour of Chaos* (2015) in New York’s Central Park, and is currently completing a new work with Bill T. Jones for the Opera Philadelphia while serving as Chief of Program and Pedagogy at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. Informed by his work with *moving and passing*, /peh-LO-tah/, an evening-length performance produced by MAPP International

Productions and commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, will premiere at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in November 2016.

### **Jon Rubin**

Jon Rubin is an interdisciplinary artist who creates interventions into public life that reimagine individual, group, and institutional behavior. Rubin is an associate professor in the School of Art at Carnegie Mellon University and Chair of the Contextual Practice program. Projects include *Conflict Kitchen* (2010–), *The Last Billboard* (2010–), *The Royal Danish Protesters* (2011), and *The Independent School of Art* (2004–06). He has exhibited at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Mercosul Biennial, Brazil; the Shanghai Biennial; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver; the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City; Rooseum, Malmö, Sweden; Sazmanab Center for Contemporary Art, Tehran; as well as in backyards, in living rooms, and on street corners. Rubin has received awards from the Art Matters Foundation, the Creative Work Fund, Americans for the Arts, and was a recent finalist for the International Award for Participatory Art. He is currently developing an alternative economic and cultural exchange system in Philadelphia's legendary Ninth Street Market with the support of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and an experimental sitcom shot both in Los Angeles and Tehran with the support of the Creative Capital Award.

### **Lenka Clayton**

Lenka Clayton is a British interdisciplinary artist whose work considers, exaggerates, and alters the accepted rules of everyday life, extending the familiar into the realms of the poetic and absurd. She is currently artist-in-residence at the Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia. Her projects include *People in Order* (2006), *Local Newspaper* (2007), *7,000 Stones* (2009), and *Two Itinerant Quilters* (2015–). In 2012 Clayton founded An Artist Residency in Motherhood. Her work has been exhibited at the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; FRAC Le Plateau, Paris; Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz, Austria; Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, Switzerland; Anthology Film Archives, New York City; and the Iran International Documentary Festival. Clayton lives and works in Pittsburgh, where she was recently awarded a Creative Development Grant from the Pittsburgh Foundation/Heinz Endowments and named Emerging Artist of the Year in 2013 by the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. Clayton and writer Michael Crowe are in the midst of an ongoing project called *Mysterious Letters* (2009–).

### **About the Edmond de Rothschild Foundations**

The mission of the Edmond de Rothschild Foundations is to promote social empowerment, inclusion, and a collaborative society. It is rooted in a century-long tradition of giving founded on humanism, inclusion, and the search for excellence. The Foundations continue to apply the same principles in the transformation of their philanthropic legacy by identifying innovative solutions and creative partnerships in entrepreneurship, the arts, health and philanthropy best practices.

### **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. The Guggenheim network that began in the 1970s when the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, was joined by the Peggy

Guggenheim Collection, Venice, has since expanded to include the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (opened 1997), and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (currently in development). The Guggenheim Foundation continues to forge international collaborations that celebrate contemporary art, architecture, and design within and beyond the walls of the museum, including the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Chinese Art Initiative. More information about the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation can be found at [guggenheim.org](http://guggenheim.org).

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