

# GUGGENHEIM

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Major Retrospective of László Moholy-Nagy Opens at the Guggenheim Museum in New York on May 27, 2016, and Travels to Chicago and Los Angeles**

***Moholy-Nagy: Future Present* is organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art**

(NEW YORK, NY, January 4, 2016)—From May 27 to September 7, 2016, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum will present the first comprehensive retrospective in nearly fifty years of the work of pioneering artist and educator László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946). Organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *Moholy-Nagy: Future Present* examines the full career of the utopian modernist who believed in the power of art and technology as a vehicle for social transformation and the betterment of humanity. Despite Moholy-Nagy's prominence and the visibility of his work during his lifetime, few exhibitions have conveyed his experimental engagement, enthusiasm for industrial materials, and his radical innovations with movement and light. This long overdue presentation, which encompasses his multidisciplinary methodology, brings together more than 300 works drawn from public and private collections across Europe and the United States, some of which have never before been shown publicly in this country.

Each of the three organizing institutions has a history of collecting and presenting the artist's works or a relationship to the interaction of art and technology, culminating in a comprehensive exhibition, innovative conservation efforts, and a scholarly exhibition catalogue examining Moholy-Nagy's practice and influence. After its debut presentation in New York, the exhibition will be on view in Chicago from October 2, 2016–January 3, 2017, and in Los Angeles from February 12–June 18, 2017.

*Moholy-Nagy: Future Present* provides an opportunity to examine the full career of this influential Bauhaus teacher, founder of Chicago's Institute of Design, and versatile artist who paved the way for increasingly interdisciplinary and multimedia work and practice. Among his radical innovations were experimenting with cameraless photography; using industrial materials in painting and sculpture; researching with light, transparency, and movement; working at the forefront of abstraction; and moving fluidly between the fine and applied arts. The exhibition features collages, drawings, ephemera, films, paintings, photograms, photographs, photomontages, and sculptures, underscoring a legacy of cross-disciplinary experimentation and a remarkable ability to work across mediums. As part of the exhibition,

a contemporary fabrication of a space originally conceived by Moholy-Nagy in 1930, *Room of the Present*, will be on display at all three venues, for the first time in the United States. The space, which was not realized in Moholy-Nagy's lifetime, contains aspects of the artist's exhibition and product design, including a replica of his iconic kinetic *Light Prop for an Electric Stage* (1929–30). *Room of the Present* illustrates the artist's belief in the power of images and his approach to the various means with which to view them—a highly relevant paradigm in today's constantly shifting and evolving technological world.

Born in 1895 in Austria-Hungary (now southern Hungary), Moholy-Nagy moved to Vienna briefly and then to Berlin in 1920, where he encountered Dada artists, Russian Constructivists, and Galerie Der Sturm, where he exhibited work on several occasions. After teaching at the Bauhaus in Weimar and then Dessau in the 1920s, producing books and painting extensively across mediums, he enjoyed success in Berlin as a commercial artist, exhibition and stage designer, and typographer. Adolf Hitler's rise to power made life increasingly difficult for the avant-garde in Germany; thus in 1934 Moholy-Nagy moved with his family to the Netherlands and then to London. Once he moved to Chicago in 1937, he never returned to Europe. In the United States, he focused on opening a school of design and made some of his most original and experimental work. He gave his full attention to American exhibition venues, showing nearly three dozen times across the United States—including in four solo shows—before his premature death from leukemia in November 1946. His interdisciplinary and investigative approach, migrating from the school to the museum or gallery space, pushed toward what he referred to as the *Gesamtwerk*, the total work for which he searched throughout his life.

*Moholy-Nagy: Future Present* is organized by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Karole P. B. Vail, Associate Curator, is the Guggenheim's organizing curator for the exhibition.

The New York presentation of *Moholy-Nagy: Future Present* is made possible by Lavazza. Funding is generously provided by the David Berg Foundation, The Hilla von Rebay Foundation, the William Talbott Hillman Foundation, and the Robert Lehman Foundation. The Leadership Committee for the exhibition, chaired by Peter and Dede Lawson-Johnston, is gratefully acknowledged for its support, with special thanks to Achim Moeller. Additional funding is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

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**About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum:** 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).

**Location:** 1071 5th Avenue (at 89th Street), New York, NY 10128 | 212 423 3500 | [www.guggenheim.org](http://www.guggenheim.org)

**About The Art Institute of Chicago:** The Art Institute of Chicago, founded in 1879, 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 interprets works in every medium from all cultures and historical periods. With a collection of approximately 300,000 art works and artifacts, the museum has particularly strong holdings in Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting, contemporary art, early 20th century European painting and sculpture, 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 more than 30 special exhibitions per year and features lectures, gallery tours, and special performances on a daily basis.

**Location:** 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603 | 312 443 3600 | [www.artic.edu](http://www.artic.edu)

**About 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 nearly 130,000 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 masterpieces from the Ancient Americas 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 one million visitors annually, in addition to serving millions through digital initiatives such as online collections, scholarly catalogues, and interactive engagement. LACMA is located in Hancock Park, 30 acres situated at the center of Los Angeles, which also contains the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum and the forthcoming Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Situated halfway between the ocean and downtown, LACMA is at the heart of Los Angeles.

**Location:** 5905 Wilshire Boulevard (at Fairfax Avenue), Los Angeles, CA, 90036 | 323 857 6000 | [lacma.org](http://lacma.org)

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