

**Seattle Art Museum Celebrates its Upcoming 75th Anniversary
with an Unprecedented Gift of Nearly 1,000 Works of Art
from over 40 Collections**

**Highlights of Gift to be Unveiled at
May 5 Opening of SAM's Expansion**

SEATTLE, March 30, 2007—The Seattle Art Museum (SAM) today announced an unprecedented series of gifts—the largest in the museum's history—from prominent museum patrons and collectors. The gifts, which commemorate the museum's 75th anniversary in 2008 and represent art from across time and cultures, will include nearly 1,000 works from over 40 collections.

In a dramatic show of support, entire collections by some of the Northwest's leading collectors have been committed over time, featuring such landmark works as Constantin Brancusi's modern masterpiece *Bird in Space* (1926); Ellsworth Kelly's *Blue, Green, Red II* (1965) and Edward Hopper's iconic oil painting *Chop Suey* (1929). In addition, donors have supported major purchases for the collection, including Richard Serra's *Wake* (2004) at the Olympic Sculpture Park; John Singleton Copley's portrait of *Dr. Silvester Gardiner* (ca. 1772), SAM's first 18th-century American painting; and *Inopportune: Stage One* (2004), a monumental installation featuring nine automobiles by the Chinese-born contemporary artist Cai Guo-Qiang that will be installed in the museum's new Brotman Forum.

"This is a landmark commitment for SAM and our community," said Mimi Gates, SAM director. "The private art collections in Seattle have evolved and grown over the last two decades. Great works of art, art of international significance, have been finding a home in Seattle and it is very important to SAM and the community that these collections stay in Seattle for the benefit and enjoyment of our community and beyond."

Among the collections committed to SAM are:

- **Susan and Jeffrey Brotman Collection**, a major international collection with a concentration of contemporary German artists such as Anselm Kiefer and Sigmar Polke;
- **Jane Lang Davis Collection**, a nationally renowned collection of postwar painting, with signature works by major Abstract Expressionists such as Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, and Clifford Still;
- **Barney A. Ebsworth Collection**, the finest collection of early modern American art in private hands which includes works by Edward Hopper, Georgia O’Keeffe and Marsden Hartley among others.
- **Marshall and Helen Hatch Collection of Northwest Modern Art**, the premier collection of Northwest masters such as Mark Tobey and Morris Graves;
- A group of Afikpo masquerade works field-collected in Nigeria by University of Washington professor emeritus **Simon Ottenberg**;
- **Sam and Gladys Rubinstein Collection** of early 20th-century European painting including works by Alexei Jawlensky, Robert Delaunay and Frantisek Kupka;
- **Jon and Mary Shirley Collection**, which includes iconic sculptures by Constantin Brancusi and Alberto Giacometti, and particular depth in the work of Alexander Calder and Chuck Close;
- **Griffith and Patricia Way Collection of Modern Japanese Painting**, one of the finest collections of Nihonga painting in the United States;
- **Virginia and Bagley Wright Collection**, the most extensive collection of modern and contemporary art in the Northwest. Assembled over the last 50 years, their collection includes works by artists such as Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Kiki Smith, Donald Judd, Carl Andre, Ed Ruscha, John Chamberlain and Helen Frankenthaler.

The announcement of these gifts coincides with the physical expansion and transformation of the Seattle Art Museum. The museum recently opened the acclaimed waterfront Olympic Sculpture Park, the new SAM Downtown opens May 5, 2007 and the Seattle Asian Art Museum in Volunteer Park will undergo renovations in 2009.

“It is a tremendous achievement for this community that our collections are being expanded and enhanced as we move into a superb new facility. It reflects the international importance of Seattle and the Seattle Art Museum and the exceptional level of collecting in this city,” said Gates.

The 75th anniversary acquisition initiative began with SAM’s commitment to expand its downtown site in 2001. Highlights from these gifts will be presented at SAM as part of its inaugural special exhibition and installation when SAM Downtown reopens in May. *SAM at 75: Building a Collection for Seattle* will feature approximately 100 works displayed in the museum's new exhibition galleries, as well as 125 works integrated into the new installation of the permanent collection. In addition, gifts to the collection are included in the initial installation at the Olympic Sculpture Park and in installations at the Seattle Asian Art Museum.

The downtown expansion of the Seattle Art Museum will more than double the amount of gallery and public space devoted to art. As part of its unique development partnership with Washington Mutual, SAM will expand into additional space in phases in correlation with the growth in audience and collections. The museum will eventually increase in size to over 450,000 square feet. This phased expansion will accommodate the requirements of the 75th anniversary commitments that will come to the museum over time as a result of partial/promised gifts and planned bequests.

“Allied Works Architecture has produced a building that truly serves our evolving collection. Its timeless and beautiful design enhances the visitors’ experience of art from every perspective,” said Chiyo Ishikawa, SAM’s Deputy Director for Art. “I believe this is a unique opportunity to have such beautiful space combined with flexibility that allows us to plan for the years ahead, and it has certainly been an incentive for collectors to know that the museum will be able to do justice to their collections as they come to us. It will no doubt also be compelling for collectors who will consider gifts in the future.”

SAM also is in the final phase of its highly successful fundraising effort, raising over \$200 million from 7,700 gifts. To date, more than \$177 million has been raised toward the \$180 million goal for the capital campaign for the downtown expansion, Olympic Sculpture Park and renovations to the Seattle Asian Art Museum. An additional \$24 million has been raised for art acquisitions and other enhancements.

“This is an extraordinary moment for culture in Seattle,” said Susan Brotman, president of SAM’s Board of Trustees. “One of the most rewarding aspects of SAM’s transformation has been the community’s recognition of these projects as a great civic effort with national and regional significance. We are thrilled by the outpouring of support from throughout the community.”

Other highlights of the gifts, which will enhance the museum’s holdings of modern and contemporary art, 18th- and 19th-century American art, European art, decorative arts and Native American art, include: Alberto Giacometti’s *The Dog* (1951), the first of the artist’s works to enter SAM’s collection; Ed Ruscha’s seminal painting *Damage* (1964); Bartolomé Esteban Murillo’s *Saint Augustine in Ecstasy* (1665-75); two silver tankards, dating from 1685 and 1893 that are centerpieces of the most important collection of American silver in private hands; and rare woven Northwest Coast Native basketry by Susan Wawatkin Bedal (1865-1947), the last traditional basket maker of the Sauk-Suiattle tribe, donated to SAM by her daughters.

“The amazing commitments to the collection and to the capital campaign as well as the completion of these extraordinary building projects are certainly the capstone of our involvement with SAM, which started over 50 years ago,” said Virginia Wright, a trustee of SAM since 1959 and with her husband, Bagley Wright, Honorary Chair of the museum’s capital campaign. “Bagley and I could not be more pleased to be part of this incredible transformation, which will surely put SAM in the first ranks of American museums.”

Major Areas of Giving

Modern and Contemporary Art

The **Susan and Jeffrey Brotman Collection** of international contemporary art includes a concentration of works by German artists including Sigmar Polke, Georg Baselitz, Anselm Kiefer and Gerhard Richter. The collection also includes works by American artists Ed Ruscha, Martin Puryear and an impressive collection of early glass by Dale Chihuly.

The **Jane Lang Davis Collection** is a nationally renowned collection of American postwar art with signature works by the major figures of Abstract Expressionism, many represented by several works each. It features career-spanning breadth with regard to Philip Guston, Mark Rothko and Franz Kline, and individual masterworks by Willem de Kooning and Clyfford Still, among others. European artists represented in depth include Francis Bacon and Alberto Giacometti. This collection will elevate SAM's collection of postwar art, providing the museum with some of its first works crucial to the era, while strengthening and broadening holdings by artists already in the collection.

The **Barney A. Ebsworth Collection** is recognized for its comprehensive survey of the early modern period in America and includes iconic works by Edward Hopper, Marsden Hartley, Georgia O'Keeffe, Joseph Stella, John Marin, John Storrs and others. These 65 paintings and sculpture establish great strength in American art in the first half of the 20th century.

Marshall and Helen Hatch's collection of approximately 100 works, is the premier collection of Northwest modern art, with major works by Morris Graves, Mark Tobey, Guy Anderson, Leo Kenney, Paul Horiuchi and others. Especially strong in the works by artists whom the Hatches knew personally, the pledge makes SAM the leading repository of works by the key Northwest masters who offer a distinct and important regional story to the large and complex narrative of American modernism.

One of the only collections in the Northwest focused on early European modernism, **Sam and Gladys Rubinstein's** collection of 35 works includes paintings by Alexei Jawlensky,

Robert Delaunay, Otto Freundlich, Frantisek Kupka and Marc Chagall, as well as works by Max Ernst, Matta, and numerous Russian abstractionists, in many cases the first time these artists are represented in SAM's collection.

Jon and Mary Shirley's collection features Constantin Brancusi's *Bird in Space* (1926), an icon of modernism, and Alberto Giacometti's *The Dog* (1951). The collection is notable for an emphasis on sculpture and studio glass. Other highlights include a special concentration of works by Chuck Close and Alexander Calder, including the monumental *Eagle* (1973) at the Olympic Sculpture Park, as well as works by Yves Klein, Jasper Johns, Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock that will strengthen SAM's collection of 1940s-1960s modern art.

The most extensive and long-standing collection of modern and contemporary art in the Northwest, the **Virginia and Bagley Wright Collection** of more than 200 works, began in the 1950s with paintings by Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Barnett Newman and others, documenting major movements such as Color Field, Pop, Minimalism, Light and Space, and Post-Modernism. The Wrights have made a point of collecting the art of their time, adding works by Helen Frankenthaler, David Smith, Kenneth Noland, Anthony Caro, Donald Judd, Carl Andre, Claes Oldenburg, Ellsworth Kelly, Tony Smith, Ed Ruscha, John Chamberlain, Mark Di Suvero, David Salle, Julian Schnabel, Gerhard Richter, Sigmar Polke, David Hammons, Robert Gober, Kiki Smith, John Currin, Maurizio Cattelan and Roxy Paine. Formed with SAM in mind and intended to elevate its collection to national status, the gift of this collection will transform, enhance and add significant depth to SAM's modern and contemporary holdings.

Other Gifts of Modern & Contemporary Art

SAM has also received significant gifts and pledges from local collectors and artists including **Jim Dine, William Gates Sr., Lyn and Gerry Grinstein, Richard and Elizabeth Hedreen, Gary Hill, Janet Ketcham, Byron Meyer, Roy McMakin, Herb and Lucy Pruzan, Herman and Faye Sarkowsky, Rebecca and Alexander Stewart,**

Bill and Ruth True, Merrill Wright, Tim Bradbury, Christina and Jim Lockwood, and Ann Wyckoff.

American Art

Besides the landmark acquisition of the Copley portrait, new additions to SAM's collection of historical American art include key works from the **Ann and Tom Barwick Collection of American Art**, especially strong in late 19th- and early 20th-century paintings.

Highlights include John Twachtman's *Hemlock Pool, Autumn* (ca. 1894), three different impressions of Mary Cassatt's etching *The Banjo Lesson* (ca. 1893), and John Singer Sargent's watercolor *Yachts at Anchor, Palma de Majorca* (1912).

Collectors **Paul Leach** and **Susan Winokur**, strong supporters of American art at SAM, have promised future gifts to the museum. Their collection is an important survey of 19th-century painting landscape paintings, with a particular concentration in Boston School artists.

The museum also received a group of objects from Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence's estate, comprising sketches and personal effects from the Lawrence home in Seattle. Most of the works are sketches by **Gwendolyn Knight** and prints by her husband, **Jacob Lawrence**. Also included in the Gwendolyn Knight collection is an important work that demonstrates how Knight was muse to more than one artist: a rare, 1934 plaster-cast bust by the European-trained portrait sculptor Augusta Savage of Knight when she was Savage's student at the Harlem Community Art Center.

Two silver tankards from the **Ruth J. Nutt Collection**, which is recognized as the best private holding of American silver, have been promised to the museum. Craftsman Jeremiah Dummer's three-quart tankard (1685) is extremely rare due to its size and unusual floral and bird design motifs, and the showcase Tiffany tankard (1893) was created for the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago.

These gifts, together with the generous donations from the Ebsworth, Davis, Hatch, Shirley and Wright collections, will give SAM significant depth in 19th- and 20th-century American art.

European Art

The European collection will be enriched by two pristine 17th-century Dutch still lifes given by a Seattle collector--a monochrome breakfast piece by Willem Claesz. Heda (1636) and a luminous *Still Life with Cherries* (1617) by still-life pioneer Balthasar van der Ast. **Richard and Elizabeth Hedreen** have promised a painting by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, *The Ecstasy of Saint Augustine* (1665-75). **Hester Diamond**, New York, has given a painting of *Leda and the Swan* (ca. 1540) by Vincent Sellaer, which will be the centerpiece of a Mannerist installation in the new European galleries.

Native American Art

Gifts to the Native American art collection include a twined Salish robe, woven entirely of mountain goat wool by Skokomish tribal member Susan Pavel, a designated purchase gift from Gayle and Charles Pancierzewski. **Vi Hilbert**, an Upper Skagit elder has given an early Puget Sound cedar root basket, a contemporary basket by well-known Klikitat weaver Nettie Jackson and a work of wood and bronze depicting the First Salmon Ceremony by the late Ron Hilbert Coy. Nine intricate baskets by **Susan Wawetkin Bedal** (1865-1947), the last traditional basket maker of the Sauk-Suiattle tribe, were gifted to the museum through the estate of Bedal's children. An array of silkscreen prints by contemporary Northwest Coast Native artists are gifts of Simon Ottenberg. A new work by Kwakwaka'wakw artist Sonny Assu, *Breakfast Series*, is a designated gift of Alexander and Rebecca Stewart.

African and Oceanic Art

Simon Ottenberg has donated a unique group of 30 masks that he collected in Nigeria in the 1950s. As a professor emeritus from the University of Washington, he has authored many books about their original use. In 2006, he traveled back to Afikpo, Nigeria to

obtain costumes that will enable visitors to see how masqueraders review the humorous and difficult sides of life.

Margaret Levi and Robert Kaplan are pledging 10 contemporary Australian Aboriginal paintings and 10 sculptures from their vanguard collection. The selection, including paintings by women artists from the community of Utopia and hollow log coffins from Arnhem Land, comprises the first gallery in a public American museum devoted to Australian Aboriginal art.

Mark Groudine and Cynthia Putnam have given a selection of African art, including a set of masks with gracefully curving beaks, horns and muzzles, and a subtle and spare wooden shield from the Dinka of Sudan.

Dr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Griffin contributed 10 shields from the Asmat region of New Guinea. Covered with incised patterns that offer protection, the shields will be featured in an installation entitled “War of Nerves.”

Dr. Oliver E. and Pamela F. Cobb’s donations will be on view in the African galleries, and will include a female figure from the Attie culture of Cote d’Ivoire, an ochred headdress from the Zulu of South Africa and a helmet mask from the Makonde of Tanzania.

Asian Art

SAM’s superb Asian collection has been enhanced by gifts and promised gifts from some of Seattle’s top collectors of Asian Art, including **Robert and Honey Dootson**’s gift of 29 works of Chinese ceramics that features important ceramics from the Tang and Song dynasties.

Henry and Mary Ann James have given a wide range of Asian art, including four screens painted by Kyoto modern artist Tsuji Kakō (1870-1931), six ceramic vases created by world-renowned Korean potter Chi Soon-taek (1912-1993), an exotic Chinese dowry

chest dated to 1873, an imperial document box from 18th-19th century, Qing imperial robes, and an iridescent lead-glazed jar from the Han Dynasty.

Allan and Mary Kollar have promised a milestone gift of approximately 50 Japanese ukiyo-e woodblock prints dating from the late 18th to early 19th century by artists such as Harunobu, Utamaro, Hiroshige, Hokusai and Syaraku.

Griffith and Patricia Way will gift an outstanding collection of over 100 works of Japanese modern paintings (nihonga). Their collection was featured in the 1999 exhibition *Modern Masters of Kyoto: Nihonga from the Griffith and Patricia Way Collection* organized by the Seattle Art Museum and later seen at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and throughout Japan. Highlights include paintings by notable Kyoto-circle artists Tsuji Kakō (1870-1931), Tomita Keisen (1879-1936) and Takeuchi Seihō (1864-1942).

SAM Downtown

SAM's downtown museum expansion, designed by Brad Cloepfil of Allied Works Architecture, features a striking vertical design and continuous ribbon of space that allows for the expression of natural light and the interaction between life within and outside the museum. The expansion accommodates the museum's growing collections, programs and audiences while enhancing downtown Seattle's cultural and economic vitality.

Developed in conjunction with Washington Mutual's new headquarters, the first phase of the expansion will inaugurate 118,000 square feet of new space. Through this partnership, SAM will meet its immediate and long-term needs in a fiscally responsible way by expanding upward into its new building in phases. At the time of the opening, SAM will occupy the first four floors of its new building. Washington Mutual will own the top four floors and will lease another eight floors from the museum until SAM is ready to expand again.

The museum will include the 5,000-square-foot Brotman Forum, two free public floors inaugurated with a monumental installation *Inopportune: Stage One* by Cai Guo-Qiang of cars tumbling through the space. A new double-height gallery, devoted to modern and

contemporary art, is a flexible space that can accommodate larger scale works. A new Porcelain Room exhibits over 1,000 porcelain works from Europe and Asia. Additional galleries are dedicated to American art from the 18th and 19th centuries, European art, Modern and Contemporary Art, African art, Ancient Mediterranean and Islamic art, Mesoamerican and Andean art, Northwest Coast Native American art, Asian art, Aboriginal and Oceanic art, and Textiles.

About the Seattle Art Museum

For more than seven decades, the Seattle Art Museum has been one of the Pacific Northwest's leading visual art institutions. When SAM opened its doors at Volunteer Park in 1933, the museum's collection focused primarily on Asian art. Today, SAM has matured into an institution with a global perspective, representing 140 cultures. SAM's collections currently number approximately 24,000 objects, and the range and depth of these collections are unmatched in the region. SAM comprises three venues: the Olympic Sculpture Park, SAM downtown, and the Seattle Asian Art Museum in Volunteer Park.