



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 29, 2012

**THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, LOS ANGELES (MOCA), ANNOUNCES NAMING OF  
PAUL SCHIMMEL EXHIBITION SPACE  
AT THE GEFFEN CONTEMPORARY AT MOCA**

**MOCA CHIEF CURATOR HONORED FOR 22-YEAR TENURE  
AS HE STEPS DOWN AND BECOMES  
INDEPENDENT CURATOR**

**Los Angeles**—The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), announced today that Chief Curator, Paul Schimmel, has resigned from his position to become an independent curator, after 22 years with the institution, organizing some of the museum's most successful exhibitions. Mr. Schimmel will continue working with MOCA on the upcoming exhibition *Destroy the Picture: Painting the Void, 1949–1962* (September 29, 2012–January 7, 2013), which explores abstraction and destruction in the period. In recognition of his many contributions to MOCA, where Mr. Schimmel has been Chief Curator since 1990, the Board of Trustees announced the naming of The Paul Schimmel Exhibition Space at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA in his honor.

“Paul’s contributions to MOCA’s curatorial program and permanent collection over the past two decades have made an indelible mark on the legacy of the museum,” said MOCA Board Co-Chair Maria Arena Bell.

Co-Chair David G. Johnson added, “With his vast knowledge of art, and keen curatorial eye, we look forward to following his work beyond MOCA, and will continue to maintain our close relationship with him. We thank Paul for this legacy, and we wish him much success.”

“Paul has been a champion of modern and contemporary art, and has been a leader in firmly establishing Los Angeles as an international art center, recognized throughout the world,” said MOCA Director and CEO Jeffrey Deitch. “The works that came into MOCA’s collection under Paul’s curatorial leadership are extraordinary, and will be appreciated by MOCA audiences for years to come. All of us at MOCA thank Paul, look forward to his continued consulting with MOCA, and wish him well.”

Mr. Schimmel reflected, “MOCA has given me an opportunity to come of age with the institution during an exciting period in its history, and has allowed me to work with an extraordinary community of artists over the past two decades.” He added, “I am deeply honored by the naming of the exhibition space at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA.”

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The space at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, which will be named in Mr. Schimmel's honor, is a dynamic exhibition platform. The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, which opened in 1983, is a former police car warehouse in Little Tokyo renovated by the architect Frank O. Gehry. It includes 40,000 square feet of exhibition space and has been host to scores of exhibitions curated by Mr. Schimmel.

MOCA's collection of works by visionary contemporary artists grew significantly under Mr. Schimmel's curatorial oversight, with the additions of works by internationally renowned artists including: Diane Arbus, John Baldessari, Alighiero Boetti, Chris Burden, Richard Diebenkorn, Peter Doig, Marlene Dumas, Olafur Eliasson, Llyn Foulkes, Sam Francis, Robert Frank, Lee Friedlander, Robert Gober, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Jasper Johns, Mike Kelley, Liz Larner, Gordon Matta-Clark, Paul McCarthy, Bruce Nauman, Cady Noland, Chris Ofili, Charles Ray, Jason Rhoades, Nancy Rubins, Edward Ruscha, Robert Smithson, Fred Tomaselli, Luc Tuymans, and Franz West. Mr. Schimmel developed the Acquisition and Collection Committee (1995), the Drawing Committee (2000), and the Photography Committee (2005). Since 1990, MOCA's collection grew by 5,749 objects, from 987 at its founding to 6,735 objects today.

Major collections acquired for MOCA during Mr. Schimmel's 22 years at MOCA include The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation Photography Collection (1995), the bequest of Marcia Simon Weisman's collection of 83 prints and drawings (1996), the Lannan Foundation's gift of 114 works by 53 artists (1997), and the Blake Byrne gift of 123 works (2004). Schimmel also organized two of the most significant permanent collection exhibitions to take place in both MOCA museum spaces simultaneously, *A Room of Their Own: From Arbus to Gober, From Rothko to Rauschenberg*; and *Collection: MOCA's First 30 Years*.

Mr. Schimmel has been a prominent figure in the international art community during his time at MOCA. Overseeing some of the most memorable exhibitions in MOCA's history, Mr. Schimmel has organized an impressive list of visionary shows, many of which traveled to major museums on national and international tours.

Mr. Schimmel has organized numerous major group exhibitions, including *Helter Skelter: LA Art in the 1990s*; *Hand-Painted Pop: American Art in Transition 1955–1962*; *Out of Actions: Between Performance and the Object, 1949–1979*; *Ecstasy: In and About Altered States*; and, *Under the Big Black Sun: California Art, 1974–1981*. In addition to Mr. Schimmel's own exhibitions, he has supervised a program of over 350 exhibitions, including over 100 devoted to the permanent collection. This program is internationally recognized both for its deeply researched and critically acclaimed, historical exhibitions, including *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, *A Minimal Future? Art as Object 1958–1968*; and, the current exhibition, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*.

Solo exhibitions he has curated include *Sigmar Polke Photoworks: When Pictures Vanish*; *Robert Gober: Untitled*; *Charles Ray*; *Willem de Kooning: Tracing the Figure*; *Laura Owens*; *Robert Rauschenberg: Combines*; and, © MURAKAMI. In addition to Schimmel's solo exhibitions, major shows have been presented of Roy Lichtenstein, Cy Twombly, Bruce Nauman, Richard Diebenkorn, Ed Kienholz, Cindy Sherman, Andy Warhol, Juan Munoz, Marlene Dumas, and Alan Kaprow, as well as the MOCA-originated standard reference exhibitions for Barbara Kruger, Martin Kippenberger, Dan Graham, and Robert Smithson.

MOCA's curatorial vision will continue to remain strong under Jeffrey Deitch's leadership, and with the

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support of the MOCA curatorial team, as well as guest curators, who will bring pioneering international perspectives to MOCA's collection and exhibitions. In this way, MOCA will continue to serve and grow its diverse audiences, which recently have increased from 147,000 to 400,000 annually.

Highly anticipated, upcoming exhibitions curated by guest curators, working closely with Jeffrey Deitch, include a solo show of artist Urs Fischer (spring 2013), and a major retrospective of Jeff Koons (January 2014), organized with the Whitney Museum of American Art, curated by Scott Rothkopf. Mr. Deitch, together with the MOCA team, has planned an exciting roster of summer programs that reflect the museum's mission to attract varied and expanded audiences, including the recently announced *FRAMEWORK*, a new series of three site-specific dance performances by L.A. Dance Project/Benjamin Millepied and Los Angeles artist Mark Bradford, in the galleries at MOCA Grand Avenue, to take place July 19, August 2, and August 9, 2012, at 7:00 p.m.

*Destroy the Picture: Painting the Void, 1949–1962* will open at MOCA Grand Avenue on September 29, 2012–January 7, 2013, and will travel to the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalog including essays by Nicholas Cullinan, Astrid Hagna-Gagnard, Sorichi Hirai, Paul Schimmel, and Robert Storr.

#### **More About Paul Schimmel:**

Paul Schimmel has been the Chief Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), since 1990, and previously served as the Chief Curator of the Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, CA (1981–89), as well as the Curator (1975–77) and Senior Curator (1977–78) of the Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX. He has won numerous awards, including two awards from the Association of Art Museum Curators (AAMC), six awards from the International Association of Art Critics (AICA), and the Award for Curatorial Excellence given by The Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College (2001). Mr. Schimmel currently serves on the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, the La Caixa Contemporary Art Collection Acquisition Committee, and is a co-Director of the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts.

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