



Media Contacts:

Libby Mark or Heather Meltzer, Bow Bridge Communications, LLC; 347-460-5566; info@bow-bridge.com

THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART/BOSTON PRESENTS

FIRST LIGHT: A DECADE OF COLLECTING AT THE ICA

AUGUST 17, 2016—JANUARY 16, 2017

Largest collection presentation to date features work by Louise Bourgeois, Paul Chan, Eva Hesse, Cindy Sherman, Kara Walker, Andy Warhol, and many others

Exhibition celebrates the tenth anniversary of the ICA's collection and occupation of its signature waterfront building

(BOSTON, MA -- July 29, 2016) – The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston (ICA) celebrates its first decade of collecting and the tenth anniversary in its Diller Scofidio + Renfro-designed facility with the largest and most ambitious presentation of its collection to date. *First Light: A Decade of Collecting at the ICA* features over 100 works by seminal artists of the 20th and 21st centuries, including Louise Bourgeois, Nick Cave, Paul Chan, Marlene Dumas, Eva Hesse, Cindy Sherman, Kara Walker, and Andy Warhol. Occupying the entirety of the museum's east galleries, *First Light* combines audience favorites with new acquisitions, many on view at the ICA for the first time.

This exhibition is organized by the ICA's curatorial department under the leadership of Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator. *First Light: A Decade of Collecting at the ICA* is on view from August 17, 2016 to January 16, 2017. During the first week of October, midway through the presentation, there will be a rotation of some of the sections (or "chapters") enabling more of the collection to be showcased and new works and juxtapositions to be explored.

"First Light: A Decade of Collecting at the ICA provides a window onto contemporary artistic practice through the ICA collection. This series of simultaneous exhibitions reveals the driving visions of curators and collectors, the social, political, material, and aesthetic concerns of contemporary artists, and the history of ICA exhibitions over the past many years," said Jill Medvedow, Ellen Matilda Poss Director. "The exhibition celebrates a monumental ten years at the ICA and marks a historic transformation in our community. We are very grateful to our generous supporters who have allowed us to grow the collection significantly and strategically."

Conceived as a series of interrelated and stand-alone exhibitions, *First Light* is organized into thematic, artist-specific, and art-historical chapters that each tell a different story. The first section features three major highlights of the exhibition. These are:

- Paul Chan's 2005 projected digital animation *1st Light*, created for the ICA, was one of the first works to enter the collection, and the inspiration for the exhibition's title. This significant mov-

ing-image piece highlights the ICA's aim to collect works of art in diverse media and by important contemporary artists with a critical voice.

- Cornelia Parker's *Hanging Fire (Suspected Arson)* (1999) is a favorite among visitors and the ICA's first promised work. Parker's first monographic exhibition was mounted at the original ICA facility in 2000.
- Kara Walker's newly acquired monumental cut-paper silhouette tableau, *The Nigger Huck Finn Pursues Happiness Beyond the Narrow Constraints of your Overdetermined Thesis on Freedom – Drawn and Quartered by Mister Kara Walkerberry, with Condolences to The Authors* (2010), is prominently displayed. On view for the first time at the ICA, the combination of materials—cut-paper silhouettes, wall paint, and framed works on paper—is unusual within Walker's oeuvre, making the work a major addition to the collection.

Other highlights include groupings of work by artists held in-depth in the collection including Louise Bourgeois, Rineke Dijkstra with Nan Goldin, and a gallery dedicated to objects from The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women. To accommodate the breadth of stories within the collection, several chapters will switch out halfway through the exhibition's run. The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women and Soft Power galleries (described below) will be on view through January 16, serving as anchors to the overall exhibition.

A new, multimedia web platform at icaboston.org accompanies the exhibition and features descriptions of the works, interviews with artists, and commentary by current and former ICA curators reflecting on works that entered the collection during their tenure. The content-rich microsite will launch in tandem with the exhibition.

"In ten years, the ICA has established a collection of great variety, ranging from historically significant work of figures such as Eva Hesse and Louise Bourgeois to the contemporary explorations of leading artists such as Kara Walker and Paul Chan," said Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator. "The work in *First Light* represents a broad range of art-making today by artists who explore the issues of our time."

First Light explores a diversity of narratives from biography and material to feminism and appropriation in the following sections or chapters:



The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women

On view August 17, 2016–January 16, 2017

The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women is the cornerstone of the ICA's growing collection. The collection includes artists working in diverse media who have made significant contributions to art over the past 40 years. This exhibition is arranged by various media and subject matters, highlighting the collection's strength in works of sculpture and assemblage, as well as drawing and painting. Included are signature works by Marlene Dumas, Ellen Gallagher, Ana Mendieta, Cornelia Parker, Doris Salcedo, Kara Walker, among others, in addition to salient historical precedents set by figures such as Eva Hesse and Louise Bourgeois. Together, these works examine issues of the political, personal, and social body, and larger concepts of

identity, all in distinct and thought-provoking ways. This section demonstrates the strength of the ICA's expanding collection and how the collection engages in critical discourses in the arts as well as broader social and cultural contexts. *The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women* is organized by Eva Respini, Barbara Lee Chief Curator.



Soft Power

On view August 17, 2016–January 16, 2017

Formed by pliable materials including rope, thread, string, and fabric, the works in *Soft Power* derive their presence and power from, on the one hand, the seductive textures, structures, and surfaces of textiles, and on the other, the evocative social and cultural connotations these materials provoke. The smears and patterns of Kai Althoff's gloss paint on fabric conflate painting and body in a

surreal clothing-like fragment in *Untitled* (2004), while Alexandre Da Cunha's *BUST XXXV* (2012) lurks like a floating figure, shrouded in its uncanny cover of mop and string. Sculptures by Josh Faught, Françoise Grossen, Charles LeDray, and Robert Rohm—crocheted, knotted, and sewn—variously lean against the wall, sprawl, pile on the floor, and hang to evoke the body by its covering, adornment, and poses only possible through their shared soft construction. *Soft Power* is organized by Dan Byers, Mannion Family Senior Curator.

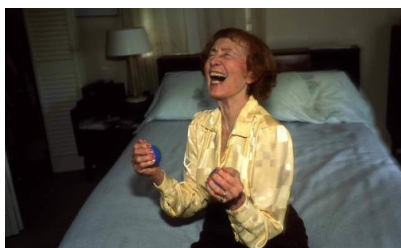


Question Your Teaspoons

On view August 17–October 2, 2016

This exhibition explores the sphere of the domestic in the making and meaning of art. A counterpoint to such celebrated contexts as the artist's studio and the public sphere, the home has often served artists, especially female artists, as a crucial site for the creation of their work. Artists in this exhibition derive inspiration from the objects, relationships, and aesthetics that surround them. Sherrie Levine, Doris

Salcedo, and Diane Simpson reimagine mundane objects in their sculptural works; LaToya Ruby Frazier, Cindy Sherman, and Andy Warhol probe familial relations through their photographs; and Chantal Joffe and Mickalene Thomas offer striking paintings of intimate interior scenes. The title of this section is from a quote by Georges Perec, the great cataloguer of everyday life who challenged readers to scrutinize the ordinary. To “question your teaspoons” is to pay attention to—and bring new attention to—a quotidian thing, to study life in order to live it differently. *Question Your Teaspoons* is organized by Ruth Erickson, Associate Curator.



Rineke Dijkstra / Nan Goldin

On view August 17–October 2, 2016

The ICA has rich holdings of works by Rineke Dijkstra and Nan Goldin, two leading figures in contemporary photography with a keen interest in portraiture. Both artists have a history with the ICA: the museum hosted Goldin's first solo museum exhibition in 1985 and one of Dijkstra's first surveys in the United States in

2001. Referencing both the historical genre of portraiture and documentary-style photography, these artists expound upon these traditions in divergent and unique ways. Goldin's bold images depict her

loved ones and closest acquaintances caught in intimate moments. From the artist's mother laughing to a drag queen lounging at home, her compositions are vibrant and rich, powerfully emotive, and full of psychological intent. Dijkstra's stark portraits, on the other hand, present the subjects in heightened focus and repose, stripped bare of context. The artists subtly and overtly examine the shifting nature of identity and self. Goldin's captures an instant within a broader narrative, expressing her subjects' personal relationships or exploring their gender identities, while Dijkstra's subjects, including new mothers and children growing into adolescence, are at the cusp of unpredictable chapters in their lives. These works, ultimately capturing everyday moments, encourage the viewers to intimately engage with the pictured subjects, and to seek out clues of their personal lives and character, reflecting our own searches for the extra in the ordinary and the thrill in the mundane. *Rineke Dijkstra / Nan Goldin* is organized by Jessica Hong, Curatorial Assistant.

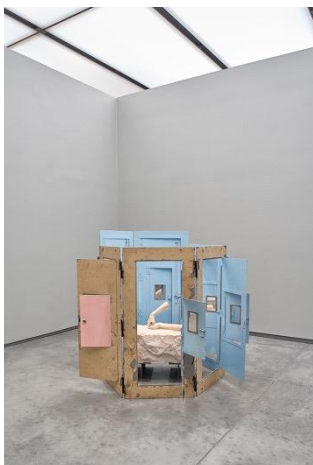


The Freedom of Information

On view October 8, 2016–January 16, 2017

The Freedom of Information is a concise survey of artworks that employ strategies of appropriation, from repurposing and rephotographing mass-media images to referencing and copying objects from art history or American consumer culture. While key moments in the history of artistic appropriation (such as the ready-made, collage, and montage) date back to the early 20th century,

it was in the 1970s and 80s that the critical terms of these practices were established in the context of a new generation of influential artists. *The Freedom of Information* traces a particular lineage of appropriation that accounts for the variety of its different models. Here, an intergenerational group of artists “take” materials from sources such as books, postcards, television, or art-specific contexts, manipulating them using cameras, printers, or scanners. The works in *The Freedom of Information* reveal that while such forms of repetition are historically rooted, appropriation remains a critically urgent means with which to address a culture saturated with images. Artists in *The Freedom of Information* include: Dara Birnbaum, Carol Bove, Anne Collier, Gilbert & George, Leslie Hewitt, Louise Lawler, Sherrie Levine, Cady Noland, Thomas Ruff, Sara VanDerBeek, Charline von Heyl, Kelley Walker, and Andy Warhol. *The Freedom of Information* is organized by Jeffrey De Blois, Curatorial Assistant.



Louise Bourgeois

On view October 8, 2016–January 16, 2017

One of the most influential artists of the 20th century, Louise Bourgeois worked for more than 70 years in a variety of materials—including wood, bronze, marble, steel, rubber, and fabric—to create a distinctive and expansive body of work. Blending abstraction and figuration, Bourgeois delved into the struggles of everyday life to create personally cathartic objects that reference the body, sexuality, family, trauma, and anxiety. Since the ICA's exhibition *Bourgeois in Boston* (2007-08), the museum has acquired a number of her works; this selection brings together sculptures and works on paper to consider her use of framing devices. From the enclosures and doors in her large-scale cell sculptures to vitrines, borders,

and platforms, the partition of space recurs in Bourgeois' work. These “frames” serve various ends, but each articulates a kind of boundary — an inside and an outside, an object and its space, the very divi-

sions Bourgeois so famously disrupted in her life's work. *Louise Bourgeois* is organized by Ruth Erickson, Associate Curator.

About the ICA

An influential forum for multi-disciplinary arts, the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston has been at the leading edge of art in Boston for 80 years. Like its iconic building on Boston's waterfront, the ICA offers new ways of engaging with the world around us. Its exhibitions and programs provide access to contemporary art, artists, and the creative process, inviting audiences of all ages and backgrounds to participate in the excitement of new art and ideas. The ICA, located at 25 Harbor Shore Drive, is open Tuesday and Wednesday, 10 AM– 5 PM; Thursday and Friday, 10 AM – 9 PM; and Saturday and Sunday, 10 AM– 5 PM. Admission is \$15 adults, \$13 seniors and \$10 students, and free for members and children 17 and under. Free admission for families at ICA Play Dates (2 adults + children 12 and under) on last Saturday of the month. For more information, call 617-478-3100 or visit our website at www.icaboston.org. Follow the ICA at Facebook/ICA.Boston, Twitter.com/ICAinBoston, and [instagram.com/icaboston](https://www.instagram.com/icaboston).

Acknowledgements

First Light: A Decade of Collecting at the ICA is sponsored by

CHRISTIE'S

This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Additional support is generously provided by Fiduciary Trust Company, Chuck and Kate Brizius, Katie and Paul Buttenwieser, Karen and Brian Conway, the Robert E. Davoli and Eileen L. McDonagh Charitable Foundation, Jean-François and Nathalie Ducrest, Cynthia and John Reed, and Charles and Fran Rodgers.



Images (from top to bottom): Cornelia Parker, *Hanging Fire (Suspected Arson)*, 1999. Wire, mesh, pins, nails, 144 × 60 × 72 inches (365.8 × 152.4 × 182.9 cm). Gift of Barbara Lee, The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women. Photo: Charles Mayer Photography. © 2016 Cornelia Parker; Françoise Grossen, *Inchworm*, 1971. Industrial cotton piping cord, approximately 2 × 20 × 13 feet (61 × 609.8 × 396.3 cm). Gift of the artist in honor of Jenelle Porter. Photo by Charles Mayer Photography. © 2016 Françoise Grossen; Mickalene Thomas, *Monet's Salon*, 2012. Rhinestones, acrylic, oil, and enamel on wood panel, 84 × 108 inches (213.4 × 274.3 cm). Promised gift of Fotene Demoulas. Courtesy the artist and Lühring Augustine, New York. © 2016 Mickalene Thomas; Nan Goldin, *Lil laughing, Swampscott, MA*, 1996. Silver dye bleach print (Cibachrome), 11 × 14 inches (27.9 × 35.6 cm). Gift of Lillian and Hyman Goldin. Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery. © 2016 Nan Goldin; Dara Birnbaum, *Kiss the Girls: Make Them Cry*, 1979. Two channel video (color, sound; 06:26 minutes) and flight cases. The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women. Courtesy the artist and Wilkinson Gallery. © 2016 Dara Birnbaum; Louise Bourgeois, *Cell (Hands and Mirror)*, 1995. Marble, metal, and mirror, 63 x 48 x 45 inches (160 x 121.9 x 114.3 cm). Gift of Barbara Lee, The Barbara Lee Collection of Art by Women. Photo: Charles Mayer Photography. © 2016 The Easton Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.