

Contact:

Robyn Wise, 415/357-4172, rwise@sfmoma.org

Libby Garrison, 415/357-4170, lgarrison@sfmoma.org

Sandra Farish Sloan, 415/357-4174, ssloan@sfmoma.org

**SFMOMA ANNOUNCES GARY GARRELS
AS SENIOR CURATOR OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE**

Gary Garrels will join the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) as the new Elise S. Haas Senior Curator of Painting and Sculpture, SFMOMA Director Neal Benezra announced today. Recognized internationally for his acclaimed exhibitions and expertise in modern and contemporary art, Garrels is currently chief curator and deputy director of exhibitions and public programs at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. He succeeds Madeleine Grynstejn, who was senior curator at SFMOMA from 2000 until her departure in March 2008 to become director of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago. The senior curator's chair in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at SFMOMA is named for the late Elise S. Haas, a distinguished San Francisco collector and dedicated Museum trustee whose family foundation endowed the position. Garrels will assume his new position at SFMOMA in September of 2008.

Neal Benezra said today, "The museum is delighted to welcome back this tremendous scholar and visionary to our curatorial team. Gary's extraordinary credentials and knowledge of post-1960s contemporary art—the continuing focus of SFMOMA's acquisitions program—will only strengthen our momentum in adding the highest quality of art to our holdings. His passion for emerging artists and capacity for new thinking will bring important art to a wider audience and extend the museum's record of innovative exhibitions. I am proud that Gary, who made such a deep impact here from 1993 to 2000, will return after eight years of brilliant accomplishment as a curator, author, and lecturer for the country's most highly regarded institutions."

Garrels joins curator Janet Bishop in the Department of Painting and Sculpture, along with assistant curators Apsara DiQuinzio, Alison Gass, and John Zarobell. As senior curator of painting and sculpture, Garrels will have primary responsibility for planning major exhibitions, instigating new scholarship, recommending acquisitions and guiding the collection, and engaging actively with artists, collectors, and curatorial colleagues around the world.

Of his SFMOMA appointment, Garrels says, "I will greatly miss the Hammer in Los Angeles, but am elated to join the outstanding team of colleagues at SFMOMA, where I have been fortunate enough to thrive earlier in my career. Assuming a senior role in SFMOMA's painting and sculpture program at this vital time in the institution's history—as the museum anticipates the completion of its new rooftop sculpture garden and gears up for its 75th anniversary celebration in 2010—promises to be an exceptionally rewarding experience in the coming years, and I look forward to furthering SFMOMA's initiatives as a leader in the field. It will be exhilarating to work with the

museum's collection and to collaborate closely with Neal, the Board of Trustees, SFMOMA's patron community, and its superb staff, whose dedication to fulfilling the museum's potential is to be admired."

In his 26-year career, Garrels has held curatorial positions at prominent institutions and organized many of the most important exhibitions throughout the country. During his tenure at the Hammer Museum as chief curator and deputy director of exhibitions and public programs (2007 to the present) and senior curator (2005 to 2007) he organized *Eden's Edge: Fifteen LA Artists* (2007) and, forthcoming in fall of 2008, *Oranges and Sardines: Conversations on Abstract Painting with Mark Grotjahn, Wade Guyton, Mary Heilman, Amy Sillman, Charline von Heyl, and Christopher Wool*. He also led the formation of the Hammer Contemporary Collection, a new collection begun in 2005 and now numbering nearly one thousand works.

Prior to joining the Hammer, Garrels served as chief curator in the department of drawings and curator in the department of painting and sculpture at The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2000 to 2005). Exhibitions he organized there include the acclaimed *Brice Marden: A Retrospective of Paintings and Drawings* (2006), which traveled to San Francisco and Berlin; *Drawing from the Modern, Part II, 1945–1975* (2005); and *Roth Time: A Dieter Roth Retrospective* (2004), which was awarded "Best U.S. Monographic Museum Show" of the year by the International Association of Art Critics (AICA). He was also a member of the curatorial committee for *MoMA at El Museo: Latin American and Caribbean Art from the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art*, exhibited at El Museo del Barrio (2004). During his tenure he transformed the museum's drawing collection, adding masterworks by such artists as Willem de Kooning, Ellsworth Kelly, and Jasper Johns, among others. He also significantly enhanced the collection of works by Latin American artists, and helped to form and secure a gift of more than 2,600 post-war era drawings from the Judith Rothschild Foundation.

Among Garrels's exhibitions during his previous tenure at SFMOMA as Elise S. Haas Chief Curator of Painting and Sculpture (1993 to 2000), are *Sol LeWitt: A Retrospective* (2000); *Celebrating Modern Art: The Anderson Collection* (2000); *Jasper Johns: New Paintings and Works on Paper* (1999); *Roy Lichtenstein: A Tribute* (1999); *Robert Rauschenberg* (1999); *Inside Out: New Chinese Art* (1999); and *Willem de Kooning: The Late Paintings, the 1980s* (1995), with the Walker Art Center. As part of SFMOMA's New Work program focusing on less well-established artists, Garrels organized shows on artists Glenn Ligon, Doris Salcedo, Kara Walker, and Andrea Zittel, among others. Under Garrels's leadership, SFMOMA acquired important works by Eva Hesse, Ellsworth Kelly, Sol LeWitt, René Magritte, Brice Marden, Piet Mondrian, Bruce Nauman, Gerhard Richter, Mark Rothko, Robert Ryman, and Andy Warhol, just to name a few.

While at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, where he was senior curator (1991 to 1993), Garrels's exhibitions included the highly acclaimed *Photography in Contemporary German Art: 1960 to the Present* (1992), which toured internationally; and *Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco: The Year of the White Bear* (1992). As director of programs at the Dia Art Foundation, New York (1987 to 1991), he organized solo exhibitions of the work of Joseph Beuys, John Chamberlain, Dan Graham, Jenny Holzer, Brice Marden, Maria Nordman, Robert Ryman, and Lawrence Weiner, among others. Previously Garrels held positions at Christie's, New York, and the

Hayden Gallery (now the List Visual Arts Center) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Among Garrels's many professional activities, he is a board member of the Merce Cunningham Foundation, The Andy Warhol Art Authentication Board, and the advisory committee for *Art21*. Previous advisory committee engagements have included *Documenta XI*; the Public Art Fund, New York; Bard College Center for Curatorial Studies; the Emanuel Hoffman Foundation, Basel; the Asia Society, New York; and the Carnegie International (2004). He has also served as a juror for the American Academy in Rome and the Tate Gallery's prestigious Turner Prize.

Born in 1951 and raised in Iowa, Garrels completed his undergraduate studies at New College in Sarasota, Florida in 1974. He subsequently entered the doctoral program in sociology at Princeton University. As his interests moved toward art, Garrels changed the direction of his academic pursuits and received an M.A. in art history from Boston University in 1984.

Since 1995, with the opening of SFMOMA's current building, the museum has vigorously built its collection with numerous acquisitions, including masterworks by Vija Celmins, Dan Flavin, William Kentridge, Gordon Matta-Clark, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Smithson, and Frank Stella. The museum has also aggressively collected works by such artists as Matthew Barney, John Currin, Olafur Eliasson, Teresita Fernandez, Felix Gonzales-Torres, Ann Hamilton, Julie Mehretu, Wangechi Mutu, Chris Ofili, Kiki Smith, and Rachel Whiteread. The museum's painting and sculpture collection—now numbering more than 7,000 works—has also benefited from gifts from a number of significant private collections of modern and contemporary art, including works from the Harry and Margaret Anderson Collection, Phyllis C. Wattis, and the Vicki and Kent Logan Collection. Recent major exhibitions organized by SFMOMA's Department of Painting and Sculpture include *The Art of Richard Tuttle* (2005), awarded "Best U.S. Monographic Museum Show" of the year by the AICA; *Robert Bechtle: A Retrospective* (2005); and *Take your time: Olafur Eliasson*, which debuted at SFMOMA and is currently on view at MoMA, New York.

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