

WHITNEY

Press Release

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THE WHITNEY TO EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS FROM EMILY FISHER LANDAU'S HISTORIC GIFT TO THE MUSEUM



Edward Ruscha (b. 1937), *Lion in Oil*, 2002. Synthetic polymer on canvas with tape, 64 3/16 x 72 1/8 x 1 9/16in.(163 x 183.2 x 4 cm) overall. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; promised gift of the Fisher Landau Center for Art P.2010.330 © Ed Ruscha. Photography courtesy of the artist.

NEW YORK, January 12, 2011 – *Legacy: The Emily Fisher Landau Collection*, an exhibition of a selection of works from the historic gift of art pledged to the Museum in May 2010 by longtime trustee Emily Fisher Landau, opens at the Whitney Museum of American Art on February 10, and remains on view through May 1, 2011. Co-curated by Donna De Salvo, the Whitney's Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Programs, and David Kiehl, the Museum's curator of prints and special collections, the exhibition,

which includes more than eighty works, will be presented in the Museum's fourth-floor galleries, which are named for Emily Fisher Landau.

“Legacy: The Emily Fisher Landau Collection is the culmination of a single collector's enduring commitment to contemporary artists and to sharing a love of art,” said Adam D. Weinberg, the Whitney's Alice Pratt Brown Director. “The gift goes beyond showcasing the best of American art to demonstrate a sense of adventure and a willingness to challenge conventional taste and fashion.”

Emily Fisher Landau's gift to the Whitney comprises 419 works by nearly one hundred key figures in American art. It is one of the most important gifts the institution has ever received. De Salvo noted, “We are privileged to be the recipient of this exceptional gift, a testament to Mrs. Landau's enterprising vision and longtime support of artists, often from the start of their careers. It's a great honor to present a selection of these works to the public.”

Emily Fisher Landau began collecting art in the late 1960s and since the early 1980s she has focused on building an important collection of contemporary American art. *Legacy* traces many of the ideas that have preoccupied artists in the United States since the late 1960s. Questions about the relevance of painting in the aftermath of Minimalism, debates about representation, “culture wars,” and a revived interest in personal narratives are driving forces in the Emily Fisher Landau collection. *Legacy* allows these questions, as well as the question of what it means to collect contemporary art, to unfold in the galleries.

One section of *Legacy* focuses on Minimalism, broadly defined, with seminal works by artists such as Carl Andre and Agnes Martin as well as works by John McLaughlin, Rodney Graham, Joseph Kosuth, Martin Puryear, and Al Taylor. Another section of the exhibition signals a return by artists to representational and other subjects generally associated with painting by artists such as John Baldessari, Barbara Kruger, Mark Tansey, Peter Cain, and Susan Rothenberg, as well as paintings by Willem de Kooning and Cy Twombly.

Legacy highlights Landau's support of a younger group of artists who engaged in the political and social dialogue that came to the forefront in the vibrant downtown New York scene in the 1980s, a period when Landau began in earnest exploring downtown galleries and artists' studios. Important works by Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Robert Mapplethorpe, Peter Hujar, Nan Goldin, Keith Haring, David Wojnarowicz, and Lorna Simpson deal with AIDS, issues of politics and gender, and race.

Legacy also shows the long-standing commitment Landau made to several artists. Here, Richard Artschwager and Ed Ruscha are each represented by works spanning their entire careers. Also, a number of works by Jasper Johns, including a painting from the *Catenary* series and a selection from the gift's complete set of the artist's screenprints made between 1968 and 1982, provide an in-depth look at Johns's career and mastery of this printing process.

Georgia O'Keeffe's *Ladder to the Moon* (1958) and James Rosenquist's *House of Fire II* (1982), other works from the Emily Fisher Landau gift, may be seen in the exhibition *Singular Visions* on the Museum's fifth floor.

Among the highlights of the gift to be presented in *Legacy* are the following:

- Works by **Carl Andre**, including seminal typewriter drawings and poems of the early 1960s and the large-scale sculpture *28 Lead Rectangle* (1968);
- Works by **Richard Artschwager**, including his monumental painting *City of Man* (1981), which spans almost fifteen feet;
- Works by **John Baldessari**, including *What This Painting Aims to Do* (1967), a prime example of his important early text paintings;
- Photographs by **Peter Hujar** from the 1970s and 80s, including iconic portraits of Andy Warhol, Diana Vreeland, Divine, Lola Pashalinski, Susan Sontag, and David Wojnarowicz;
- Works by **Jasper Johns**, including the first of the artist's important *Catenary* paintings to enter the museum's comprehensive holdings of his work;
- Two works by **Willem de Kooning**, a 1952 *Woman* drawing and a noteworthy 1987 painting, *Untitled*, which is the latest de Kooning canvas in the Whitney's collection;
- Works by **Agnes Martin**, including important drawings from the 1960s and an early painting *This Rain* (c. 1960).

-- A work by **Glenn Ligon**, who will be the subject of a Whitney retrospective opening on March 10, 2011;

-- Works by **Ed Ruscha**, ranging in date from 1965 to 2002, among them two important canvases, *Give Him Anything and He'll Sign It* (1965), one of his wry bird paintings, and *Lion in Oil* (2002), from the artist's recent series of mountain paintings.

In addition to the works mentioned above, the exhibition will include significant paintings by **Susan Rothenberg** and **Andy Warhol**; and the earliest **Robert Gober** sculpture to enter in the Whitney's collection;

Emily Fisher Landau became a trustee of the Whitney in 1990. At the Whitney, [she](#) has served as co-chair of the Contemporary Committee; a member of the Library Fellows; a member of the Chairman's Council; and has participated on several other Museum committees. In 1995, she generously established an endowment to support the Biennial, the Whitney's signature contemporary exhibition. That same year, the fourth floor galleries at the Whitney were named in her honor. In recognition of her many years of generosity, she was honored at the Whitney's 2006 annual fall Gala. Her daughter, Candia Fisher, has served on the Whitney's Print Committee (1996-2000) and Photography Committee (since 2007), continuing the family's tradition of generous support for the Whitney Museum.

Emily Fisher Landau has shared her time and generosity beyond the walls of the Whitney. In 1991, the Fisher Landau Center for Art was established in Long Island City, housed in a former parachute harness factory. The Center, designed by Max Gordon in association with Bill Katz, is devoted to art education and the exhibition and study of the Fisher Landau collection of contemporary art and stages regular exhibitions drawn from its important holdings. She has served as a trustee of SITE Santa Fe and the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, both in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and has also served on acquisition committees at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, for several decades. In 1999, she established the Fisher Landau Center for the Treatment of Learning Disabilities at Albert Einstein College of Medicine at Yeshiva University and has supported a program at Columbia University Teachers College and New York University that has helped New York City private-school students with learning disabilities. She was made a Chevalier, Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, by the government of France in 1986, received the Haym

Solomon Award from the Anti-Defamation League in 2006, and was honored with the 2008 CITYarts Making a Difference through the Arts Award.

Catalogue

Legacy: The Emily Fisher Landau Collection, edited by Dana Miller, showcases some of the best art made in the United States during the past five decades. Included are essays by Donna De Salvo and Joseph Giovannini. The book is published by the Whitney Museum of American Art, in association with Yale University Press, and contains entries on each of the artists whose works are included in the Landau gift, as well as a full-color checklist.

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the preeminent institution devoted to twentieth-century and contemporary art of the United States, with a special focus on works by living artists. The Whitney's collection, which comprises over 18,000 works by more than 2800 artists, includes major works and materials from the estate of Edward Hopper, the largest public collection of works by Alexander Calder, as well as significant works by Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, Kiki Smith, and Andy Warhol, among other artists. With its history of exhibiting the most promising and influential American artists and provoking intense critical and public debate, the Whitney's signature show, the Biennial, has become the most important survey of the state of contemporary art in America today. Founded in 1930, the Whitney was first housed on West 8th Street. The Museum relocated in 1954 to West 54th Street and in 1966 inaugurated its present home at 945 Madison Avenue, designed by Marcel Breuer. The Whitney is currently moving ahead with plans to build a second facility, designed by Renzo Piano, located in downtown Manhattan at the entrance to the High Line in the Meatpacking District.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

Karthik Pandian: Unearth Singular Visions	Now on view
Slater Bradley and Ed Lachman: Shadow	Now on view
Charles LeDray: workworkworkworkwork	Through January 23, 2010
Modern Life: Edward Hopper and His Time	Through February 13, 2011
Legacy: The Emily Fisher Landau Collection	Through April 10, 2011
Glenn Ligon: AMERICA	February 10-May 1, 2011
Cory Arcangel: Pro Tools	March 10-June 5, 2011
Lyonel Feininger: At the Edge of the World	Opens May 26, 2011
	Opens June 30, 2011

The Whitney Museum is located at 945 Madison Avenue at 75th Street, New York City. Museum hours are: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday. General admission: \$18. Full-time students and visitors ages 19–25 and 62 & over: \$12. Visitors 18 & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission to the Kaufman Astoria Studios Film & Video Gallery only: \$6. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 6–9 p.m. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.