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**December 15, 2021**



**MSU Broad Art Museum Breaks Collection Narratives with New Exhibition, *History Told Slant: Seventy-seven Years of Collecting Art at MSU***

**East Lansing, MI** – The Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University (MSU Broad Art Museum) is proud to present *History Told Slant: Seventy-seven Years of Collecting Art at MSU*, on view from Jan. 15–Aug. 7, 2022. This exhibition takes an expansive view of the collection at the MSU Broad Art Museum, reveling in the great breadth of works within the collection while also confronting the dominant narratives that shape its contours. *History Told Slant* coincides with the museum’s 10th year anniversary, as part of a roster of exhibitions highlighting the Zaha Hadid-designed building, the museum’s collections, and conversations between the unique architecture and the artwork within. The exhibition opens to the public on Friday, Jan. 14 from 7–9pm.

Taking cue from the great poet Emily Dickinson, who encourages us to “tell all the truth but tell it slant,” the exhibition breaks with conventions of the western art historical canon to acknowledge gaps and fissures within the collection. Ultimately, this effort is part of the museum’s ongoing efforts to develop a more inclusive version of the history of art—one less predicated on singular, white, Eurocentric values, favoring instead a plurality of perspectives and voices to help shape the larger narratives.

“What does it mean to collect art today? What stories do we tell, and what voices do we uphold? In the wake of recent social upheavals (including the resurgence of racial and environmental justice movements), along with the ongoing global pandemic, many museums and other arts organizations have been called upon to reflect on their values and the position of power and

authority they hold within our societies,” explains Steven L. Bridges, Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs at the MSU Broad Art Museum. “This is something our staff and board of advisors take very seriously at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum. *History Told Slant* is the result of our own grappling with these ideas. It’s a celebration of our beloved collection, but also an attempt to reconsider the narratives and foundations upon which the collection was built. Ultimately, the work to build a more diverse, accessible, equitable, and inclusive institution must also involve thinking and doing differently.”

“My wife, Rebecca, and I are drawn to the MSU Broad Art Museum, in part, because of our shared love for Zaha Hadid. Zaha's vision of architecture and design continually pushed boundaries and created dialogue,” says the chair of the museum’s board of advisors, Alan Ross. “Today we’re most excited about the museum’s exceptional exhibitions that amplify the voices of diverse communities and advance the values of inclusion and connectivity; values that are paramount at MSU. We created our endowed exhibition fund at the MSU Broad to support public exhibitions, like *History Told Slant*, for generations to come.”

This survey exhibition results from looking at the collection through several angled lenses. In both literal and figurative ways, the slanted architecture of the Zaha Hadid-designed galleries offers an opportunity to explore shifting perspectives in how we approach and understand art history and the collecting practices that have shaped many museums across the world, including the MSU Broad Art Museum. Key organizing principles that frame the exhibition include the recognition of different visual storytelling and narrative strategies from across different geographies, time periods, and cultures; investigations of how the collection came to be and the ethics of collecting, then and now; and how confronting and learning from the past can help us better determine the course ahead. The exhibition also blends global perspectives with the local with a section focused on the history of art at Michigan State University and in the mid-Michigan region.

*History Told Slant* thus offers a joyous and illuminating experience, asserting the collection as a source of continued study and appreciation on campus and in our community, while also providing a platform to engage conversations around social and racial justice, colonial histories of exploitation, and the role of art in spreading awareness and cultural competency throughout our communities and the world.

In addition to *History Told Slant: Seventy-seven Years of Collecting Art at MSU*, the MSU Broad Art Museum’s spring exhibitions include *Kahlo Without Borders*—seeking to connect museum visitors to the intimate and creative world of Frida Kahlo, particularly towards the end of her life, and presenting for the first time to the public clinical files from this period—and *Beverly Fishman: Recovery*—a major commission that dialogues with the notion of recovery and the geometries, lines, and volumes of the MSU Broad Art Museum. All three exhibitions are on view Jan. 15–Aug. 7, 2022.

**Exhibition Credits:** *History Told Slant: Seventy-seven Years of Collecting Art at MSU* is organized by the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University with

contributions from Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs Steven L. Bridges; SEEK Graduate Fellow Emma Creamer; former Assistant Curator Georgia Erger; former Assistant Curator Katie Greulich; and Curatorial Research and Administrative Assistants Elijah Hamilton-Wray and Thaís Wenstrom. Support for this exhibition is provided by the Alan and Rebecca Ross Exhibition Endowment.

**The Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University (MSU Broad Art Museum)** connects people with art through experiences that inspire curiosity and inquiry. Presenting exhibitions and programs that engage diverse communities around issues of local relevance and global significance, the MSU Broad advances the University values of quality, inclusion, and connectivity. Opened on November 10, 2012, the museum was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Zaha Hadid and named in honor of Eli and Edythe Broad, longtime supporters of the university who provided the lead gift.

**Michigan State University** has been working to advance the common good in uncommon ways for more than 150 years. One of the top research universities in the world, MSU focuses its vast resources on creating solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges, while providing life-changing opportunities to a diverse and inclusive academic community through more than 200 programs of study in 17 degree-granting colleges.

Image: Willie Cole, *Man, Spirit, Mask*, 1999. Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University, MSU purchase.

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