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For Immediate Release

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Des Moines Art Center presents 2019 Fingerman Lecture Series: The Changing Role of Museums

DES MOINES, IOWA (February 2019) – On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Fingerman Lecture, the Des Moines Art Center presents a series of four lectures by leading museum directors about the role of museums in addressing the complexity of today’s cultural, political, and social concerns. James Rondeau, Kaywin Feldman, Franklin Sirmans, and Kevin Gover will visit the Art Center this spring and fall, and present ideas that challenge long held beliefs about museums and envision a bold and relevant future for our cultural institutions.



James Rondeau
Photo: Anna Knott



Kaywin Feldman
Photo: Daniel Dennehy



Franklin Sirmans
Photo: 2013 Museum
Associates/LACMA



Kevin Gover
Photo: Smithsonian
Institution

Each lecture will take place in Levitt Auditorium. They are free and open to the public but reservations are required. Reservations are now open for the Rondeau and Feldman lectures; reservations for the lectures by Franklin Sirmans and Kevin Gover will be available beginning June 4. More information can be found on the Art Center’s website, desmoinesartcenter.org.

***James Rondeau**

President and Eloise W. Martin Director of the Art Institute of Chicago
“Expanding the Path Forward for Museums”
Thursday, April 11 / 7 pm

***Kaywin Feldman**

Nivin and Duncan MacMillan Director and President of the Minneapolis Institute of Art; recently named the Director of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
“Art and Empathy: The Wonder of Wonders”
Sunday, May 5 / 1:30 pm



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***Franklin Sirmans**

Director of the Pérez Art Museum Miami

"A View from the Center of the Americas: Re-Envisioning Miami's Art Museum"

Thursday, September 12 / 7 pm

***Kevin Gover**

Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian

"Why Americans Should Unlearn their History"

Sunday, October 27 / 1:30 pm

Setting the stage for this series is a primer lecture by Director of Curatorial Affairs/Senior Curator Alison Ferris on the state of the field. In this presentation, Ferris will discuss *Scaffold*, a sculpture by Sam Durant at the Walker Art Center (2017); Dana Schutz's painting *Open Casket* in the 2017 Whitney Biennial; the Hollywood film *Black Panther*; and Decolonize This Place – an arts-activist collective devoted to the decolonial overhaul of New York City museums. Ferris' lecture poses complicated questions that both artist and the museum field are grappling with: What are art museums' responsibilities in this fraught moment in history? Who gets to decide which histories to address in art? Who should tell the stories and how should they be told? Are there limits and responsibilities that go along with artistic freedom and curatorial judgment? Following the lecture, guests are invited to attend a reception and community gathering in the lobby where they will have an opportunity to continue processing these questions. Guests are encouraged to grab a drink and join a conversation.



Director of Curatorial Affairs/Senior
Curator Alison Ferris

***Primer Lecture + Reception and Community Conversation**

Alison Ferris, Director of Curatorial Affairs/Senior Curator

Thursday, March 7 / 7 pm

***FREE reservations can be made at desmoinesartcenter.org by clicking on the EVENT RESERVATIONS bubble on the homepage. An email confirmation will be sent shortly after a successful reservation.**



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This series is made possible through generous gifts by Louis and Lois Fingerman. The artists and scholars who have spoken at the Art Center have enriched understanding of the works of art collected here, as well as provided the opportunity for the community to become familiar with ideas and topics embodied in the art of our time. It is hoped these presentations will spark conversations that promote curiosity, further critical and empathetic thinking, and inspire dialogue outside the museum.

Des Moines Art Center

Recognized by international art critics as a world-class museum in the heart of the Midwest, the Des Moines Art Center, an AAM-accredited institution, has amassed an important collection with a major emphasis on contemporary art. The collection's overriding principle is a representation of artists from the 19th century to the present, each through a seminal work. This accounts for an impressive collection that ranges from Edward Hopper's *Automat* to Jasper Johns' *Tennyson*, Henri Matisse's *Woman in White*, Georgia O'Keeffe's *From the Lake No. 1*, Francis Bacon's *Study after Velásquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, Bill Viola's *Ascension*, and Cecily Brown's *Half-Bind*.

The Art Center's physical complex marries with the collection for a totally integrated experience. The collection is housed in three major buildings, each designed by a world-renowned architect—Eliel Saarinen, I. M. Pei, and Richard Meier. With the exception of special events, admission to the museum is free.

In September 2009, the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park opened in Des Moines' Western Gateway Park. Philanthropists John and Mary Pappajohn provided funding for and donated 30 sculptures by internationally acclaimed contemporary artists to the Des Moines Art Center. The collection of sculptures by such artists as Ai Weiwei, Louise Bourgeois, Deborah Butterfield, Willem de Kooning, Mark di Suvero, Olafur Eliasson, Keith Haring, Ellsworth Kelly, Yayoi Kusama, Jaume Plensa, Richard Serra, and Joel Shapiro is the most significant donation of artwork to the Art Center in a single gift in the museum's history. The Pappajohn Sculpture Park is a collaboration of the Pappajohns, the City of Des Moines, the Des Moines Art Center, and numerous corporate and private donors.

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