

HISTORY

Since Contemporary Forum was founded, our members have worked energetically to build the Museum's collection of modern and contemporary art. What follows is a listing of the most important contributions made by CF to the modern and contemporary collection. Many of these works of art were purchased in full by CF; others were purchased in part by CF or its members; and still others were contributions from personal collections.

1979

Bud and Bobbie Haas, early members of the Forum and generous contributors to the Museum, donated **Robert Irwin's, *Untitled***, 1969, a work in acrylic paint on cast acrylic.

1983

Donation by Howard and Jean Lipman of a sculpture by **Donald Judd, *Untitled*** (DSS 68), 1965, a work done in lacquer and enamel paint on aluminum. Unfortunately, the work was slightly damaged, and had to be put into storage. The Judd Foundation would not agree until recently to allow its restoration. The Lipmans were trustees at the Whitney Museum of American Art and Phoenix Art Museum, and they donated several sculptures to us, including the Judd. In the recent words of Brady Roberts, former Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, this is "an important Judd progression. . . [that] typifies Judd's specific objects -- industrially fabricated sculpture composed with rational, mathematical formulas that have no representational or symbolic content." The work has been restored and is now on display in the Ellen and Howard C. Katz Wing for Modern art.

1985

Bruce Kurtz joins Phoenix Art Museum as the Curator of our collection. Carol Smith, CF newsletter editor, said in her column, "We cannot afford to purchase much at the moment, so Mr. Kurtz feels that we should use our resources to emphasize Program, while still encouraging donations." At the time, CF was in its fourth year, and Diane Cummings (now Halle, and later president of the Board of Trustees) was CF president.

1986

CF donates **Gregory Amenoff's, *Sirocco*** (1985), an oil on canvas.

1987

The Museum purchases **James Turrell's, *Crater Site Plan with Major Alignments*** (1996), a photo emulsion on wax and mylar with ink, paint and wax pastels.

Acquisition of **Harmony Hammond's, *Camposanto I*** (1986), an oil on canvas, with funds from CF.

1988

The Lipmans show their generosity again, donating **Lee Bontecou's, *Untitled*** (1988), a work in welded steel and canvas.

1989

This year saw the first investment of major funds by CF for ***Dodge City*** (1961), by **Billy Al Bengston**. Funds were provided for this oil lacquer on masonite work by CF, Sette Publishing Company, the National Endowment for the Arts and other purchase funds.

1991

Bud and Bobbie Haas donate again, this time **Mark Rothko's, *Untitled (Blue and Green)***(1968) a work in oil on paper mounted on canvas.

That year's dinner auction yielded \$13,600 -- not a lot by the standards of later events, but enough to make the final payment that established the \$50,000 Cummings Acquisition Endowment Fund. The event was a spectacular night on the tennis court at the home of Gai and Buzz Williams. Artists created tablecloth and napkin art. CF followed this "theme" approach to the dinner auctions for several years, asking Valley artists to create works suited to the theme of the evening.

1992

Under the leadership of Curator Bruce Kurtz, the Forum made or assisted with several acquisitions in 1992:

Robert Arneson, *Stream-a-Head*, (1974) Terra cotta glazed ceramic. Gift of Mr. Marvin Small, by exchange, the National Endowment for the Arts, Contemporary Forum, G. Peter and Regina Bidstrup, and others.

Ed Ruscha, *High Speed Gardening*, (1961) Oil on canvas. Gift of Mr. Marvin Small by exchange, and others. Bruce Kurtz said, "Along with the Bay Area Figurative artists, these three [Ruscha, Naumann and Baldessari] were among the first California contemporary artists to produce work of international significance, leading to the establishment of Los Angeles as the second most important contemporary art center in the world (next to New York)." This purchase was not participated in by CF.

Bruce Kurtz was working on building a body of contemporary art produced in the Western U.S. *

Also added that year: **Mayme Kratz's *Garden House #6*** and **Robert Adams' *Two Schools of Thought***, "thanks to the generosity of Contemporary Forum members Bill Hardin and Michael Johns."

In the Spring of 1992, Contemporary Forum matched funds donated by the Nathan Cummings Foundation, in two funds. The funds were started in 1988, with \$25,000 in

each from the Foundation. In 1992, CF matched the money donated for the Artists' Materials Fund Endowment, which that year reached \$56,110. We also reached the \$25,000 needed to endow the Acquisition's fund.

1993

Acquisition of **Deborah Butterfield's *Ponder***, (1981), a wood, wire and steel sculpture. It was a gift of Dr. and Mrs. Jay Cooper and with additional funds provided by Mr. David Kluger, Mr. and Mrs. Orme Lewis, Mr. Karl Lilienfield, Mr. and Mrs. S. Kootz, Mr. and Mrs. H. Luce, and Mr. and Mrs. R. Miller, by exchange. It has become one of the most beloved and popular objects in our collection.

1994

CF visited the Rodin Crater, where James Turrell gave them a tour of his work, scheduled to be completed by the year 2000!

1995

Modern and Contemporary Curator David Rubin oversaw the additions of: **George Herms, *Kethor***, (1965-81). Assemblage; **Jay DeFeo, *Untitled***, (1972-73). **Photocollage and tape**; **Wally Hedrick, *Blank Cartridge Pistol***, (1974). **Ink on canvas**; **Wallace Berman, *Untitled (Griffin)***, (1965). Verifax collage. . .all with funds provided by CF.

David Rubin encouraged our purchase of these works to fill out our collection of Bay Area Figurative School of Art and the Southern California Light-and-Space genre. Works of this type were at the time being featured in a retrospective at the Whitney Museum of Contemporary Art and SFMOMA.

1996

The Museum acquires **Hans Burkhardt's, *Lime Pit***, (1990), an oil and assemblage on canvas. Purchased with funds provided by Contemporary Forum, this work is a memorial to those who died during the Persian Gulf War.

CF also purchased **Mr. Kurtz**, in honor of Bruce Kurtz, by Texas artist **Vernon Fisher**, with funds provided by CF and a large group of appreciative CF members.

1997

This year saw the addition of a number of purchases and donations:

Nancy Dwyer, *Wall of Desire (Desire, Despair, Destroy, Destiny)*, (1996). Glass. Museum purchase with funds provided by CF.

Petah Coyne, *Untitled #789*, (1995). Mixed media, including chicken wire, ribbons and candle wax. According to the artist, the work alludes metaphorically to "the complexity, will, strength, and endurance of the female spirit." She says it was inspired, in part, by the

*In the early years of CF's existence, the mission of the Museum with respect to contemporary art was stated in these words by the Museum's Board of Trustees: *The contemporary art collection of Phoenix Art Museum centers on art produced in the United States between 1960 and the present, with an established and continuing emphasis on art produced in the western United States. Works by artists of the West Coast, particularly the urban centers of California, have and will continue to figure prominently in the Museum's collecting. The work of Arizona artists, enthusiastically collected in the past, will continue to be an important are of active collecting. -- 1993*