

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ACQUIRES MAJOR COLLECTION OF CONCEPTUAL ART FROM SETH SIEGELAUB AND THE STICHTING EGRESS FOUNDATION, AMSTERDAM

New York, June 10, 2011—The Museum of Modern Art has acquired a major group of works from the collection of exhibition organizer, publisher, and dealer Seth Siegelau, a key supporter of artists working in dematerialized art practices in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The collection includes 20 defining works of Conceptual art by Vito Acconci, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, On Kawara, Joseph Kosuth, Robert Smithson, and Lawrence Weiner, all of whom moved away from the traditional production of objects and chose instead to explore language, sound, time, movement, or mapping as their primary mediums. In addition, Seth Siegelau and the Stichting Egress Foundation have donated to The Museum of Modern Art Archives Siegelau's own extensive archives, containing correspondence, photographs, notes, exhibition proposals, and many other significant documents that offer a tremendous resource to scholars of this period.

As part of the acquisition, Siegelau has given the Museum four major works: Robert Barry's *90mc Carrier Wave (FM)*, 1968, which transmits inaudible radio waves throughout a given space; Douglas Huebler's *Duration Piece No. 6* (1969), a series of photographs documenting the gradual dissemination of a rectangle made of sawdust on the floor of Siegelau's "January 5–31, 1969" exhibition; Joseph Kosuth's *Titled (Art as Idea as Idea). The Word "Definition,"* (1966–1968), an early Photostat enlargement of a dictionary entry for the word "definition;" and Lawrence Weiner's *A 36" x 36" Removal to the Lathing or Support Wall of a Plaster or Wallboard from the Wall* (1968), a work which, according to the artist's statement, can be fabricated or can simply exist as language. The remainder of the acquisition is a Museum purchase.

"This collection of works and archives has great historical importance, as many of the works were shown together in critical exhibitions of the late 1960s and early 1970s that radically challenged traditional notions of the art object," said Glenn D. Lowry, Director of The Museum of Modern Art. "We are very grateful to Mr. Siegelau and to the Stichting Egress Foundation for their generous donation of four works of art and the archives."

A selection of these works are reunited for the first time in the newly reinstalled Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Painting and Sculpture Galleries, which open on June 22. Highlights include an untitled work by Barry consisting of a nylon monofilament installed from floor to ceiling, from 1969; Huebler's *New York—Boston Exchange Shape* (1968); Kosuth's *Titled (Art as Idea as Idea). The Word "Definition;"* and Weiner's *A Wall Pitted by a Single Air Rifle Shot* (1969).

Throughout his working life, beginning in 1964 when the then 23-year-old opened his first gallery, Seth Siegelau Contemporary Art, on 56th Street in Manhattan, Siegelau has been dedicated to promoting the work of some of the most important figures of the 1960s, such as

Barry, Huebler, Kosuth, and Weiner. After closing his gallery in 1966, Siegelau independently organized 21 exhibitions and other projects in a variety of venues through 1971—both in physical spaces and, most significantly, in the form of books, in which he re-defined the exhibition catalogue itself as the exhibition. Like the work being made by the artists he championed, Siegelau's approach to this material raised important questions about the making, display, ownership, distribution, and selling of works of art. It also brought forward issues relating to the internationalization of the art world, the participation of the spectator, and artists' right to control their own work, all of which still have tremendous resonance today. In relation to the latter, he initiated and drafted in 1971, in collaboration with lawyer Robert Projansky, *The Artist's Reserved Rights Transfer and Sale Agreement*, which proposed a practical solution for artists to be able to maintain partial control over the use and resale of their work. In early 1972 Siegelau left New York and the art world to live in Europe and pursue other projects.

Together with the recently acquired Art & Project/Depot VBVR Gift (2007), Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection Gift (2009), and the Daled Collection (2011), this acquisition transforms the collection of The Museum of Modern Art into a preeminent center of Conceptual art, one of the decisive movements of the 20th century.

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