

# THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FRIDAY, JULY 18, 2008

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## ART INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES OPENING DAY OF MODERN WING

\* Highly Anticipated Building by Renzo Piano Showcasing  
Modern and Contemporary Art Will Open to Public on Saturday, May 16, 2009 \*

\* Modern Wing Opening to Kick Off Week of Free Admission \*

\* *Cy Twombly: The Natural World, Selected Works 2001–2007*  
to Inaugurate the Modern Wing's Special Exhibition Galleries \*

The Art Institute of Chicago is pleased to announce that the **Modern Wing**, designed by Renzo Piano, will open to the public on **Saturday, May 16, 2009**. The **Nichols Bridgeway**, a pedestrian bridge designed by Renzo Piano that connects the Modern Wing to Millennium Park, will open the same day. In celebration of the opening of the largest addition in the Art Institute's history, **admission to the entire museum will be free through Friday, May 22, 2009**. Opening Day will be preceded by a week of special activities for school children, staff, members, and donors.

"The opening of the Modern Wing is an historic moment for the Art Institute of Chicago—the culmination of a decade of work and dedication by everyone at the museum," said Tom Pritzker, Chairman of the Board of Trustees. "It also represents an historic moment for the city. The building will showcase as never before the breadth and depth of the Art Institute's collections of modern and contemporary art, which have not previously been seen to their fullest advantage due to limited gallery space in the existing museum buildings. The Modern Wing signals to the world the cultural caliber of the city of Chicago and reaffirms its place as a leading cultural destination."

The Modern Wing's special exhibition galleries will be inaugurated with *Cy Twombly: The Natural World, Selected Works 2001–2007*, on view **from May 16 to September 13**,

**2009.** This exhibition of approximately 30 paintings, works on paper, photographs, and sculptures will feature work by the artist never before seen in a U.S. museum and is anchored by an untitled series of seven acrylic and wax crayon works on paper commissioned by the Royal Botanical Garden in Edinburgh. The engagement with the natural world is a theme that will run throughout the exhibition, befitting the transparency and dialogue with the outdoors that the Modern Wing offers. The exhibition will present sculptural works—made of a variety of materials, including wood, wire, plaster, plastic, string, and paint—all referring to nature in their suggestion of weathering and decay. The canvases include selections from the series *A Gathering of Time* (2003), an untitled grouping from the *Winter Pictures* (2004), and a recent group of monumental *Paintings* (2007) inspired by haiku. Premiering in the United States in this exhibition is a group of paintings on wood panel (2005–2007) from the *Salalah* series.

The 264,000-square-foot Modern Wing will house the Art Institute's collections of modern European art and contemporary art, with new gallery space for the collections in photography and architecture and design. The permanent collection galleries on the third floor will be installed with the museum's world-renowned collection of European painting and sculpture from approximately 1900, including the work of Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Constantin Brancusi, Wassily Kandinsky, Piet Mondrian, Salvador Dalí, and other leading artists. The permanent collection galleries on the second floor will house the museum's revelatory collection of contemporary art, from the work of mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century American artists such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning to installations of the work of Andy Warhol, Gerhard Richter, Robert Gober, Charles Ray, the Chicago "Imagist" school, and Eva Hesse. Photography galleries and a "black box," or new media, gallery will be found on the first floor, with additional second-floor galleries devoted to the museum's collection in the fields of architecture and design.

The gallery spaces in the new building will be augmented by a number of distinctive public areas. The Modern Wing will be oriented around **Griffin Court**, which forms the building's "main street," offering dramatic views north to Millennium Park and the downtown Chicago skyline. Also on the first floor of the building will be the new **Ryan Education Center**, a 20,000-square-foot facility that includes classroom and studio space for school children and families; and a garden with a specially commissioned sculpture.

The Ryan Education Center will be adjacent to the **BP Student Esplanade**, a new dedicated entrance for school groups.

The third floor includes a dining facility and the **Bluhm Family Terrace**, which will feature rotating sculpture exhibitions by contemporary artists. The inaugural exhibition in the Terrace will feature a site-specific project by the German artist Rosemarie Trockel.

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**MUSEUM HOURS:**

10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

**10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m. Thursday. Target Free Evenings after 5:00 p.m.**

10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday

**SUMMER HOURS:**

10:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

**10:30 a.m.–9:00 p.m. Thursday, Friday. Target Free Evenings after 5:00 p.m.**

10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday

Free all day, every day in February.

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

**Please check [www.artic.edu](http://www.artic.edu) before your visit.**

**Admission: Adults, \$12.00; children 12 and over, students, and seniors, \$7.00; children under 12 free; members always free.** Target Free Evenings are free to all, except for certain special exhibitions that may require full or extra admission fee. City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a "Check Us Out" card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including the Art Institute of Chicago. Members always have free, unlimited access to the museum, including ticketed exhibitions. Join today at [www.artic.edu/aic/joinnow](http://www.artic.edu/aic/joinnow).

To reach the Art Institute on the World Wide Web, contact us at: <http://www.artic.edu/aic>

**The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park, located across from Millennium Park.**