

# The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release  
August 1997

## SELECTIONS FROM THE DANNHEISSER GIFT, COMPRISING 85 MAJOR CONTEMPORARY WORKS, OPENS THIS FALL AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

*On the Edge: Contemporary Art from the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection*

**On View: September 30, 1997–January 20, 1998**  
**Media Preview: September 29, 1997, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.**

One of the largest and most significant gifts of art in The Museum of Modern Art's history, a group of 85 major contemporary works by 33 European and American artists, is on view for the first time from September 30, 1997 through January 20, 1998. *On the Edge: Contemporary Art from the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection* comprises paintings, sculptures, prints, photographs, and video installations given to the Museum by Elaine Dannheisser and the Dannheisser Foundation last year. Some of the larger works will be presented in a rotating selection during the course of the exhibition. (See attached for a complete list of the artists whose works are represented.)

Organized by Robert Storr, Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, *On the Edge: Contemporary Art from the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection* reveals an ensemble exceptional in its combination of range and focus. Assembled over the last decade and a half, the collection on view incorporates a breadth of works from the minimalist sculptures of Carl Andre and Richard Serra to the austere paintings of Robert Ryman and Brice Marden. The exhibition also includes the unnerving videos, drawings, and installations of Bruce Nauman, the staged photographs of Cindy Sherman, the subtle conceptual projects of Felix Gonzalez-Torres, and the uncanny objects of Robert Gober, Jeff Koons, and Matthew Barney.

-more-

Mr. Storr remarks, "Greatly strengthening the Museum's holdings in classic Minimalism, neo-Expressionism, and neo-Dada, as well as 'process' and conceptual art and various new forms of photography, the Dannheisser Collection provides a detailed and discerning overview of some of the best and most provocative work produced in our day."

Elaine Dannheisser has had a long association with The Museum of Modern Art. Named a member of the Board of Trustees in 1996, she has also served as a member of the Museum's Committee on Painting and Sculpture and of the International Council since 1990. An aspiring painter in the late 1940s and student of art history and interior design and decorating, Mrs. Dannheisser began acquiring art with her late husband, Werner, and has been a collector of important modern works for four decades.

In his introduction to the catalogue accompanying the exhibition, Kirk Varnedoe, Chief Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, writes, "From [the collection's] earliest moment, it has been the product of a constant process of change and refinement that has always pushed it toward more precise selectivity, more risk-taking engagement with recent art, and higher degrees of uncompromising toughness in the particular pieces selected . . . We salute not only the wonderful quality of the artworks [Mrs. Dannheisser] has brought together, but also her personal tenacity, her acumen as it has evolved over decades of collecting, and the intensity of her engagement with contemporary art."

The Dannheisser collection is distinguished by its holdings of work in virtually every medium by both established modern figures and some of the most radical and provocative young artists of the past decade. Notable for its balanced representation of both American and

European artists, the group of works underscores connections between parallel activities on the two continents over the last quarter century.

Large concentrations of work by Guber (nine pieces), Gonzalez-Torres (six pieces), Nauman (ten pieces), and Sigmar Polke (six pieces) provide MoMA with the most extensive holdings of these artists to be found in the United States.

Other highlights in the exhibition include an important example of Joseph Beuys's reliquary vitrines; *April 24, 1990* (1990) from On Kawara's "Today" series; four major pieces by Koons; a 1971 encaustic diptych and *Vine* (1991-93), the Museum's first significant acquisition of a webwork painting, by Marden; and Polke's works on paper and canvas from the early 1970s to 1992, among them a primary example of his double-sided transparency paintings of the late 1980s. Also represented are important photographs by Bernd and Hilla Becher, Gilbert & George, Dan Graham, Andreas Gursky, and Thomas Struth, sculptures by Katharina Fritsch, and paintings by Anselm Kiefer.

This exhibition is supported in part by TDI.

## Publication

*On the Edge: Contemporary Art from the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection*, by Robert Storr, with an introduction by Kirk Varnedoe, accompanies the exhibition. It contains 66 color and 36 black-and-white illustrations. Published by The Museum of Modern Art and distributed in the U.S. and Canada by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, the book is available in The MoMA Book Store for \$24.95 (paperbound).

The publication accompanying this exhibition is made possible by a generous grant from Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro.

\* \* \*

No. 45

For more information, contact Lisbeth Mark, 212/708-9847, Department of Communications. Visit our Web site at [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org).

## Artists included in the exhibition:

Carl Andre	Thomas Struth
Richard Artschwager	Michelle Stuart
Matthew Barney	Lawrence Weiner
Bernd and Hilla Becher	Christopher Wool
Joseph Beuys	
Francesco Clemente	
Sue Coe	
Tony Cragg	
Gunther Förg	
Katharina Fritsch	
Gilbert & George	
Robert Gober	
Felix Gonzalez-Torres	
Dan Graham	
Andreas Gursky	
Georg Herold	
Jenny Holzer	
On Kawara	
Anselm Kiefer	
Jeff Koons	
Richard Long	
Brice Marden	
Reinhard Mucha	
Bruce Nauman	
Sigmar Polke	
Richard Prince	
Robert Ryman	
Richard Serra	
Cindy Sherman	