

# Message from Glenn Lowry

November 2015

From a sweeping exhibition of Henri Matisse's cut-outs to a provocative online project exploring the dark side of design, 2014–15 brought a lively array of art and ideas to The Museum of Modern Art.

Our efforts to continually enrich and renew our collection saw a newly commissioned film by Thom Andersen, Tania Bruguera's haunting video and performance installation *Untitled (Havana, 2000)*, a classic Fender Stratocaster, Jasper Johns's iconic *Painted Bronze*, Glenn Ligon's powerful set of self-portrait screenprints, Julie Mehretu's monumental *Invisible Sun*, and August Sander's landmark *People of the Twentieth Century* photography project enter our collection. Key works by Iakov Chermikov, Gustave Le Gray, Bouchra Khalili, Beryl Korot, Gina Pane, Francis Picabia, Lynne Ramsay, Jorge Rigamonti, Nelson Pereira dos Santos, Richard Serra, and Rosemarie Trockel also added depth and breadth to our holdings this year.

After extensive conservation and research, Matisse's beloved room-sized work *The Swimming Pool* returned to view as a centerpiece of *Henri Matisse: The Cut-Outs*. The Museum's walls and floors were transformed by Robert Gober's enigmatic installations. Yoko Ono's pioneering work celebrated a homecoming 40 years after the artist staged her renegade debut in front of MoMA. Artists, cultural leaders, and visitors shared their stories and responses to Jacob Lawrence's Migration Series, which was shown in its entirety at MoMA for the first time in 20 years as part of *One Way Ticket: Jacob Lawrence's Migration Series and Other Visions of the Great Movement North*. Cai Guo-Qiang's monumental fishing boat pierced with thousands of arrows suspended overhead, and Nalini Malani's multimedia installation blending mythology and history, were just two mind-expanding works in a sweeping reinstallation of our contemporary collection.

We also examined the rapid expansion of major urban centers, challenged notions of authorship in *Sturtevant: Double Trouble*, relaunched our pioneering Elaine Dannheisser Projects series, and presented a range of exhibitions drawn from our collection, featuring works by Jean Dubuffet, Gilbert & George, Harry Shunk and János Kender, Grete Stern and Horacio Coppola, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and Andy Warhol, among many others. At MoMA PS1, *Zero Tolerance* brought together a global array of art addressing tensions between freedom and control, and marionettes reenacted the history of the Crusades from an Arab perspective in Wael Shawky's epic video trilogy.

In our theaters, retrospectives of Wim Wenders and Robert Altman, an exploration of Mexican film noir, a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Technicolor, and our annual New Directors/New Films festival made for an exciting year—made even more special as we celebrate the Department of Film's 80th anniversary. This year also saw the preservation and screening of unreleased footage from the earliest known black-cast feature, which shed new light on the entertainment industry during a challenging time of segregation. As part of our performance program, acclaimed choreographer Trajal Harrell gave visitors a rare glimpse of his working methods as part of his two-year residency, and groundbreaking choreographer Yvonne Rainer staged an intimate East Coast premiere of her latest work.

The discovery of new artists and the reexamination of established ones are key components of our curatorial work, with research and scholarship generating the ideas that feed our program. Our Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives (C-MAP) research and exchange initiative continued to explore art across Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, and Asia, bringing together curators, scholars, and artists at MoMA and abroad. We also completed a major multi-year project to preserve and manage MoMA's collection of over 1,600 digital artworks.

Celebrating creativity, asking questions, and engaging audiences of all ages is central to all our efforts, and this year was no different. Visitors tried their hand at Matisse's cut-out techniques and sketched live models in celebration of Toulouse-Lautrec's Paris, Yoko Ono's *White Chess Set* turned a game of competition

into one of cooperation, our new Prime Time outreach initiative for older New Yorkers launched to great enthusiasm, NYC teens collaborated with artists and presented their artwork in an exhibition, and our children's books about Henri Matisse and Jacob Lawrence brought inspiration to younger readers. This year also marked the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and MoMA joined cultural organizations across the city in celebrating initiatives that make museums welcoming for all.

In digital news, [moma.org](http://moma.org) turned 20, and we are deep into redesigning the site to make it the best possible resource for our audiences. We published the immersive e-book *Picasso: The Making of Cubism 1912–14*, created an audio walking tour of Jacob Lawrence's 1930s Harlem, hosted Wikipedia edit-a-thons to improve entries about key artist communities, launched our third free video-based online course in partnership with Coursera, and expanded our live-stream capabilities to bring our programming to audiences everywhere. And, in an exciting collaboration with Instagram, our #ArquiMoMA project brought more than 21,000 present-day perspectives into the exhibition *Latin America in Construction: Architecture 1955–1980*.

Our growing collection, programs, and audience are our greatest successes, but also our greatest challenge. Keeping pace requires not only more space, but better and more flexible architecture that enhances the experience of looking at art and encourages conversation. These are key goals for our current building project, and we will continue to work with Diller Scofidio + Renfro on plans that will increase our galleries by 30%, allow us to better share the ever-expanding story of modern art, and create more welcoming spaces throughout the building.

I hope you were able to join us for even a few of the many unforgettable experiences that were made possible with your support and enthusiasm. We connected over three million visitors at MoMA and MoMA PS1—and millions more through our touring exhibitions and online channels—with inspiring art and ideas. Among the Museum's awards and accolades, *Time Out* hailed MoMA as the best art museum in the country, and this was because of you—our remarkable trustees, donors, members, fans, visitors, and talented staff. Thank you.

As the seasons change, so do our galleries, and I invite you to visit us for an exciting fall season featuring the work of Pablo Picasso, Walid Raad, Joaquín Torres-García, Juliana Huxtable, along with contemporary photography. With upcoming exhibitions devoted to Jackson Pollock, Marcel Broodthaers, Maria Hassabi, Edgar Degas, and contemporary Japanese architecture, the next year promises to be equally lively. I look forward to keeping you updated on our plans for the future, and to working together to make MoMA a place where the familiar and the new always come together in thought-provoking and unexpected ways.

With best wishes for a happy and safe holiday season,

Glenn D. Lowry