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MoCP

Museum of
Contemporary Photography

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Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College Chicago Announces New Director Natasha Egan

Chicago – The Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP) at Columbia College Chicago is pleased to announce the appointment of Natasha Egan, its current Associate Director, to the position of Director. Rod Slemmons, current Director at the MoCP, becomes Curator at Large and Director of Special Projects in Columbia’s Office of Academic Research.

Beginning September 1, 2011, Mr. Slemmons will move into the Office of Academic Research to coordinate the department’s participation in a college-wide reprioritization initiative before his retirement from the college on September 1, 2012. Mr. Slemmons joined the Museum of Contemporary Photography in 2002 after working as the Curator of Prints and Photographs at the Seattle Art Museum and teaching at the University of Washington. Since 1978 Slemmons has organized over 60 exhibitions, among them *Like A One-Eyed Cat*, a thirty-year retrospective of Lee Friedlander’s work; *Shadowy Evidence*, the art of Edward Sheriff Curtis and his contemporaries; and *Beyond Novelty*, a survey of contemporary photographers using new digital technology.

“While I look forward to the coming year in working with the Office of Academic Research, I’m quite proud of all that we’ve been able to accomplish over my past nine years at the MoCP,” says Mr. Slemmons. “When I arrived, the permanent collection began at 1957 and was purely American. We quickly changed that to 1936, allowing us to include major holdings by photographers working during the Great Depression— plus, we diversified the collection by including more international work. Our collection has now doubled in size, to approximately 12,000 prints, and it has been more heavily utilized by Columbia students and

faculty, as well as the public. We've been able to build on the museum's publication program by producing 12 books during my time here, not to mention the numerous essays the curators and I have contributed to major publications. But most importantly, I'm so proud of my entire staff and all the work they put into achieving re-accreditation this year from the American Associations of Museums."

Jo Cates, Dean of the Library and Associate Vice President for Academic Research at Columbia College Chicago, stated that she feels "very fortunate that the college is able to keep Rod around for one more year. I know that he and his wife Kiff will remain in Chicago after 2012, where Rod plans to continue to teach and write. He has done an outstanding job by increasing the scholarship of the museum's exhibitions and programming. I am grateful that Natasha Egan has accepted the Director position. She truly has a depth of knowledge and experience with the museum, and I look forward in seeing her vision for the MoCP take shape in the coming years."

In total, Natasha Egan has worked at the MoCP over the past 15 years. As Associate Director and Curator, she has organized numerous international and national exhibitions such as *Alienation and Assimilation: Contemporary Images and Installations from the Republic of Korea*; *Made in China*, focusing on the global impact of manufacturing in China; *The Edge of Intent*, which examined the utopian aspirations of urban planners; *The Road to Nowhere?* for Fotofest 2010 Contemporary US Photography; and *Public Works*, examining the political, economic, and social dimensions of built infrastructure. Egan has contributed essays to such publications as *Shimon Attie: The History of Another* (Twin Palms Press, 2004); *Beate Gütschow: LS / S* (Aperture, 2007); *Michael Wolf: The Transparent City* (Aperture, 2008); and *Placing Memory: A Photographic Exploration of Japanese American Internment* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2008). In addition, she frequently juries national and international exhibitions and lectures. She holds an MA in museum studies, an MFA in fine art photography, and a BA in Asian studies.

"I am honored to have been appointed the next director of the Museum of Contemporary Photography," says Egan. "The institution has seen significant progress under Rod Slemmons' direction and I'm thrilled to build upon his efforts. I look forward to working closely with the museum staff in this new capacity and to engage with Columbia College Chicago's faculty and staff along with the museum's constituency to continue presenting the highest quality programming. The MoCP's impressive permanent collection, innovative exhibitions, and leading educational programs demonstrate the museum's rich history. I look forward to building upon the past 35 years by engaging our community through new initiatives and programs at the MoCP."

MoCP SPONSORS

The exhibitions, presentations, and related programs of the MoCP are sponsored in part by After School Matters; the Terra Foundation for American Art; the Lannan Foundation; the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; the National Endowment for the Arts; the David C. and Sarajean Ruttenberg Arts Foundation, the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, American Airlines, the official airline of the MoCP; and our members.

ABOUT MOCP

The Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), a resident organization of Columbia College Chicago, is the only museum in the Midwest with an exclusive commitment to the medium of photography. By presenting projects and exhibitions that embrace a wide range of contemporary aesthetics and technologies, the MoCP strives to communicate the value and significance of photographic images as expressions of human thought, imagination, and creativity.

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