

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

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BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION GRANT

\$504,000 Award to Fund Curatorial Fellowship Program

AUSTIN, Texas— September 10, 2013 — The Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin has been awarded a \$504,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to establish a curatorial fellowship program for a six year period. In collaboration with the University's Department of Art and Art History, the Blanton will pilot an innovative and rigorous program for art history doctoral students that facilitates opportunities for object-based study and promotes a comprehensive understanding of museum operations. Mellon Fellows will receive substantive, hands-on professional training as they work with Blanton curators, as well as educators and other key staff, on all aspects of exhibition and collection activities.

"We are grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for this prestigious and very generous award," said Blanton Director Simone Wicha. "By integrating the classroom experience with museum training, this program will transform the Blanton's engagement with art history graduate students. Working closely with the museum's talented staff will enhance their professional and intellectual preparation as the next generation of museum leaders. It is the goal of the Blanton and the Department of Art History to elevate the museum's curatorial internships to a level of national prominence and reinforce UT's reputation as a premier center for the study of art history."

"The University of Texas at Austin possesses a rare combination of institutional and intellectual resources to provide professional museum training for students who will define both academic and arts institutions in the coming years," said Jack Risley, chair of the Department of Art and Art History. "The Mellon Fellowships present a unique opportunity for both the Blanton and the Art History doctoral program to create something greater than the sum of their parts."

The Mellon Fellowships will be one academic year in length and awarded through a competitive process to current and incoming Ph.D. students in UT's art history program. Three positions will be offered per year, one in each of the Blanton's core collection areas: Prints and Drawings, and European Paintings; Modern and Contemporary Art; and Latin American Art. Mellon Fellows will develop skills ranging from advanced object research and connoisseurship to identifying curricular connections and creating interpretive resources. All fellows will develop a project that grows out of their work at the Blanton, which could include a gallery installation, electronic publication, catalogue essay, interpretive brochure, or other resources for University and community audiences.

To provide further training for Mellon Fellows, the Blanton will create a multidisciplinary professional development seminar focusing on a variety of topics relevant to both curatorial practice and museum operations. Speakers will include Blanton senior staff, UT faculty from a range of disciplines, and outside guests who are leaders in the field and visionary thinkers. Fellows will also receive travel stipends to attend at least one conference or symposium, or to accompany Blanton curators on research and planning trips.

About the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation currently makes grants in five core program areas:

- Higher Education and Scholarship
- Scholarly Communications and Information Technology
- Art History, Conservation, and Museums
- Performing Arts
- Conservation and the Environment

Institutions and programs receiving support are often leaders in fields of Foundation activity, but they may also be promising newcomers, or in a position to demonstrate new ways of overcoming obstacles to achieve program goals. The Foundation's grantmaking philosophy is to build, strengthen and sustain institutions and their core capacities, rather than be a source for narrowly defined projects. As such, the Foundation develops thoughtful, long-term collaborations with grant recipients and invests sufficient funds for an extended period to accomplish the purpose at hand and achieve meaningful results.

About the Blanton Museum of Art

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art is one of the foremost university art museums in the country and holds the largest public collection in Central Texas. Recognized for its modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings, and encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings, the Blanton offers thought-provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.

The museum is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10AM-5PM, Saturday from 11AM-5PM, and Sunday from 1PM-5PM. Thursdays are free admission days and every third Thursday the museum is open until 9. Admission Prices: Adults \$9, Kids 12 and under FREE, Seniors (65+) \$7, Youth/College Students (13-21) \$5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-holders. For additional information call (512) 471-7324 or visit www.blantonmuseum.org.

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