



### The Israel Museum Announces Significant 2019 Acquisitions and Program Highlights

#### *Museum Builds Upon Global Impact with Major Acquisitions Expanding the Range and Depth of the Permanent Collection While Continuing to Mount and Support Major Exhibitions*

(December 18, 2019) Jerusalem, Israel – The Israel Museum, Jerusalem continued to strengthen and expand its impact through major acquisitions for their encyclopedic collection in 2019. Significant acquisitions included contemporary works spanning sculpture, photography, and mixed media by artists such as Christian Boltanski, Asta Gröting, Alejandro Cesarco, and Simon Fujiwara, the latter three of which were the first works by the artists to enter the Israel Museum’s collection. A major gift of 43 modernist photographs, including works by lesser-known female photographers, also significantly expanded the Museum’s modern photographic holdings. This year the Museum also continued the presentation of significant exhibitions embodying the mission of the institution to mount accessible, dynamic presentations showcasing the institution’s holdings both at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem and globally.

“We are delighted with the Museum’s achievements in 2019, and are excited to continue this momentum as we enter the new year,” said Isaac Molho, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Israel Museum. “The acquisitions made possible in the past year by our loyal and generous patrons worldwide enrich and broaden the Israel Museum’s outstanding holdings. We look forward to showcasing these significant new works, as well as other treasures from our permanent collections, in our dynamic exhibition program in the years to come.”

“Over the past year, we’ve continued to build our world-class exhibition program while also adding important new works to our collection that expand our art historical narrative, thanks to the generous support of our unparalleled network of supporters,” said Ido Bruno, Anne and Jerome Fisher Director of the Israel Museum. “Our exhibitions embodied the Israel Museum’s commitment to connecting audiences with our significant collection in new ways, and audiences abroad had the opportunity to engage with our collection through major loans and traveling exhibitions, expanding the global reach of the institution. In addition, through our access and inclusion programs, audiences who are blind and visually impaired have had the opportunity to experience our collection and exhibition through specially designed sensory engagement programs, led by trained guides at the Museum monthly. We are well-poised to continue building on our goals for our collection, exhibition program, and global engagement for 2020 and beyond.”

Through the support of the Museum’s global Friends networks—international groups of patrons and friends committed to supporting the Israel Museum and its advancement—the Israel Museum was able to acquire the following works in 2019:

- **Asta Gröting’s *Mausoleum*** sculpture from the series *Berlin Façade* (2016), a series dedicated to exploring Berlin’s damaged facades as a protest against forgetting, was acquired for the Israel Museum through the Contemporary Art Acquisitions Committee of the American Friends of the Israel Museum (AFIM) in New York.
- **Christian Boltanski’s *Les Regards (Glances)*** (1993/2018), comprising 9 photographs; Alejandro Cesarco’s *Studies for a Series on Love (Wendy’s Hands)* (2015), made up of two inkjet prints; and Simon Fujiwara’s *Untitled (Penthouse, Correctional Facility, and Extension)* (2017/2018), a mixed media installation, also acquired through AFIM in 2019. The pieces by

Gröting, Cesarco, and Fujiwara all mark the first work by the artists to enter the Israel Museum's collection, expanding the range and depth of the Museum's holdings.

- **Julian Rosefeldt & Piero Steinle's *Detonation Deutschland*** (1996), a 7 channel video installation; **Sebastian Riemer's *mdl\_grl\_20hc***, a pigment print from the series *Girls* (2018); and **Claudia Fontes' *Footnote***, composed of 5,000 broken fragments of ceramic wrapped in cloth with paper labels (2018) were acquired for the Israel Museum by AFIM's West Coast Acquisitions Committee.
- Two self-portraits by **Zanele Muholi**, considered one of the most celebrated South African artists today—***Zibuyile, Parktown*** (2014) and ***Balindile IV, The Square, Cape Town*** (2017)— were gifted by The South African Friends of IMJ and by Ellen, Dan and John Shapiro Photography Fund. These portraits, both exploring ideas of culture and identity, are currently exhibited as part of the Israel Museum's contemporary photography interventions in the permanent exhibition galleries.
- Gary B. Sokol, supporter and benefactor of the Israel Museum, also pledged a unique collection of **43 photographs** by **Germaine Krull, Albert Renger-Patzsch, Florence Henri, Alma Lavenson, and Laure Albin Guillot**, among others, from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that significantly expands the Museum's holdings of modernist photography. This major gift was pledged in recognition of and to complement the Museum's exhibition *A Modern Love: Remarkable Photographs from the Israel Museum* (on view through January 5, 2020). This gift includes several artworks by women photographers active in interwar Europe, some of whom are rarely mentioned in the historiography of the medium despite their seminal contribution to its evolution.

The Israel Museum's 2019 exhibitions explored a wide range of media and subject matter, exemplifying the institution's mission of presenting engaging exhibitions featuring the holdings of the institution in new, insightful, and exciting ways and while demonstrating the collection's relevancy and resonance in everyday life and making connections to contemporary issues. These exhibitions showcasing the Museum's collection to local audiences and newcomers from around the globe, alongside loans from major institutions, drew a significant number of visitors to the Museum.

- *Maimonides: A Legacy in Script* (on view December 11, 2018 through June 10, 2019), an exhibition exploring Maimonides' central role in Jewish history through a comprehensive presentation of his original writings and rare illuminated manuscripts, attracted a large and robust audience and welcomed 120,000 visitors.
- *Through Time and Space* (on view May 21, 2019 through November 9, 2019), an exhibition that for the first time brought together the restored diary of Israel's first astronaut, a miniature Torah Scroll, and a fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls, significant artifacts all linked by their survival through extraordinary circumstances, welcomed 100,000 visitors from around the globe.
- *Peter and Pan: From Ancient Greece to Neverland* (on view June 11, 2019 through December 12, 2019), a major exhibition tracing the metamorphosis of the Greco-Roman nature god Pan into the fictional character Peter Pan, drew 110,000 visitors.
- *Victory over the Sun* (on view December 28, 2018 through June 10, 2019), an exhibition charting the evolution of Russian avant-garde and nonconformist art over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, welcomed over 69,000 visitors.

In addition to the Museum's on-site presentations, the Israel Museum's exhibition *The Miracle of M.C. Escher*, which originated as an exhibition organized by the Israel Museum in 2014 in Taiwan, concluded its tour in Japan and was viewed collectively by more than 400,000 visitors. The exhibition, featuring 150 prints and drawings from the Israel Museum's collection highlighting Maurits Cornelis Escher's artistic

development and the range of techniques used by the artist, marked the first time the Museum sent an exhibition to Japan, where it traveled to four venues.

Significant works from the Israel Museum's permanent collection were also featured as part of *The World between Empires: Art and Identity in the Ancient Middle East* exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York from March through June 2019. These artifacts included the bronze Statue of the Emperor Hadrian from the camp of the Roman army near Tel Shalem, Beth Shean Valley (117–138 CE), a central work from the Israel Museum's collection and one of only three existing bronze portraits of Hadrian. It was exhibited together with a group of unique objects from "the cave of letters" in Nahal Hever in the Judean Desert, where letters of Bar Kokhba, the leader of the second rebellion of the Jews against the Roman Empire were found together with the personal belongings of the rebels. These works were exhibited next to loans from Jordan and Lebanon.

As the Museum and its global network of supporters look toward the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Museum, the Israel Museum and American Friends of the Israel Museum (AFIM), the Friends organization based in the United States dedicated to raising awareness and support for the Israel Museum, also announced new leadership appointments in 2019. Elliot Safra and Stacey Bronfman were appointed Co-Vice Chairs of the International Council. Tobias Meyer and Michael Sachs were both appointed to the Board of the American Friends of the Israel Museum. Lisa Dennison was appointed to the Executive Committee of the American Friends of the Israel Museum and Rosalind Gorin and David Norman were both appointed to the National Committee of the American Friends of the Israel Museum.

### **About The Israel Museum, Jerusalem**

The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, is Israel's foremost cultural institution and one of the world's leading encyclopedic museums. Founded in 1965, the Museum's terraced 20-acre campus houses a wide-ranging collection of art and archaeology of world-class status. Its holdings include the world's most comprehensive collections of the archaeology of the Holy Land, and Jewish Art and Life, as well as significant and extensive holdings in the Fine Arts, the latter encompassing ten separate departments: Israeli Art; European Art; Modern Art; Contemporary Art; Prints and Drawings; Photography; Design and Architecture; Asian Art; the Arts of Africa and Oceania; and the Arts of the Americas. The campus also includes the Shrine of the Book, which houses the 2,000-year-old Dead Sea Scrolls, the world's oldest biblical manuscripts; an extensive model of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period; the Billy Rose Art Garden; and a dynamic Youth Wing for Art Education whose educational programs attract over 100,000 children every year. In just over fifty years, the Museum has built a far-ranging collection of nearly 500,000 objects through an unparalleled legacy of gifts and support from a wide circle of friends and patrons throughout the world. The Museum also embraces a dynamic program of some 20–25 new exhibitions a year, and a rich annual program of publications, educational activities, and special cultural events that reach out to every sector of the population.

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