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The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Awards The RISD Museum of Art \$1 Million Grant

Gift continues long history of support for academic collaborations through the College and University Art Museum (CUAM) Program and aims to increase academic access to Museum collections in new Minskoff Center for Prints, Drawings, and Photographs in the Chace Center

PROVIDENCE (November 7, 2008)—A \$1 million grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design (The RISD Museum) will create an endowment to support a three-year postdoctoral curatorial fellowship in the Department of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs. The department occupies the Minskoff Center for Prints, Drawings, and Photographs on the fourth floor of the new Chace Center, and houses the Museum's largest collection, 26,000 works on paper. The goal of the fellowship, given through The Mellon Foundation's College and University Art Museum program, is to increase academic use of this rich source of material by faculty and students at Brown and RISD. The works in the collection represent a history of the graphic arts, with outstanding examples by artists such as Albrecht Dürer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Francisco de Goya, Edouard Manet, James McNeill Whistler, and Jasper Johns.

"In the 12 years since The RISD Museum first received support through the Mellon program, we have significantly expanded and strengthened our relationships with faculty at Brown and RISD," said Hope Alswang, the Museum's Director. "Through this Fellowship, our curators will initiate new programs with area academic institutions, advance collaborations between the Museum and RISD and Brown faculty and students in a broader range of departments, and deepen scholarly engagement with our collection."

Since 1996, The RISD Museum has been the recipient of a total of \$2.25 million from The Mellon Foundation to encourage greater use by faculty at Brown and RISD of the 84,000 works of art in the collection. The establishment of the Mellon endowment served as a catalyst for dramatically increased use of the collections by both Brown and RISD faculty and students and a steadily increasing number of academic collaborations, including the development of courses, exhibitions, and internships.

The importance of the Museum to the academic program at RISD goes back to the joint founding of the College and Museum in 1877. The Museum is just as vital to neighboring Brown University faculty members. Dr. Evelyn Lincoln, Associate Professor, History of Art and Architecture and Italian Studies at Brown, said, "In virtually every one of the courses I teach I depend on the tremendous resources available through the RISD Museum. The curators are deeply knowledgeable about their subjects, and engaged with every aspect of the students' learning, interests, and performance."

The Minskoff Center for Prints, Drawings, and Photographs opened on September 27, 2008 on the fourth floor of RISD's new Chace Center. The space, part of architect José Rafael Moneo's design of the building,

was specifically meant to preserve one of the Museum's most-used and largest collections while creating greater opportunities for scholars, faculty, and students to study and teach from these works of art.

The RISD Museum of Art, a world-class museum in Providence, RI, was founded as part of Rhode Island School of Design in 1877. Its permanent collection of more than 84,000 objects includes paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, costume, furniture, and other works of art from every part of the world, including objects from Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and art of all periods from Asia, Europe, and the Americas, up to the latest in contemporary art. In addition, the Museum offers a wide array of educational and public programs to more than 100,000 visitors annually.

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