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SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO (SAIC)
PRESIDENT WALTER E. MASSEY TO EXTEND LEADERSHIP

Chicago, IL—Cary McMillan, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), announced today the Board of Trustees of the Art Institute of Chicago voted unanimously on April 11 to extend through the end of the 2015–16 academic year the appointment of Walter E. Massey, Ph.D. as SAIC President. The news comes as SAIC celebrates several milestones enhancing its position of international leadership and strength among independent colleges of art and design.

Massey, who became SAIC President in September of 2010, has been leading SAIC through a period marked by a number of influential achievements. U.S. News and World Report announced March 13 that SAIC’s Master of Fine Arts program rose to the nation’s second rank among 220 peer institutions. Four alumni won Fulbright awards this academic year, the largest number of Fulbright recipients hailing from a single U.S. college of art and design in 2011–12. In August SAIC’s Master of Architecture degree became its newest professionally accredited graduate curriculum, becoming one of just five accredited MArch degrees among all those granted by the 41 members of the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD). On May 7 SAIC will open its LeRoy Neiman Center, a two-story, 14,000-square-foot gathering space for students, alumni, faculty, and staff in SAIC’s historic John B. and Alice R. Sharp Building on the northeast corner of Wabash Avenue and Monroe Street.

“During his tenure, President Massey has fortified SAIC’s strategic planning and advancement efforts and set a vision for SAIC to remain a leader in art and design education,” says Tom Pritzker, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the Art Institute of Chicago.

“We are extremely fortunate for President Massey’s commitment to SAIC and his leadership abilities,” says McMillan. “I look forward to working with him over the next four years and continuing the momentum that he has set for the growth of the school.”

“Walter Massey is excited by what we do at SAIC and his passion for our leadership in the field of art and design education is a beacon of light. His impeccable governance is an amazing resource for SAIC that we can continue to draw from as we move into the future,” says Candida Alvarez, Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor, Department of Painting and Drawing. Paul Ashley, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Liberal Arts, adds, “The knowledge that Walter Massey will lead us four more years gives us confidence moving forward to meet the challenges ahead. We are proud that he has chosen to lend his extraordinary leadership to SAIC’s future.”

A prominent physicist who has served as Director of the Argonne National Laboratory and Director of the National Science Foundation, Massey has also served in higher education as Professor of Physics and Vice President of Research at the University of Chicago, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs of the University of California system, and
President of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, where he is also President Emeritus. Throughout his academic career Dr. Massey has been an advocate for issues surrounding minority students and education. He developed and directed the Inner City Teachers of Science Program while he was Dean of the College at Brown University, and was a founding trustee of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. Massey has been the recipient of more than 30 honorary degrees from institutions that include Yale University, Northwestern University, Amherst, and Ohio State University. He lives in Hyde Park on Chicago’s South Side with his wife, Shirley.

A complete bio of President Walter E. Massey, PhD is available online in the SAIC Press Room.

Recent SAIC Faculty Accomplishments

The New York Times Book Review published a review of Writing faculty member Adam Levin’s new story collection, Hot Pink (McSweeney’s Rectangulars) on March 25. Author Peter Orner reviews the collection of short stories and cherishes Levin’s “sheer delight in language,” highlighting the uniqueness of voice and emotions present in the stories. “There’s an exuberance here that is absent from safer and too often soulless collections,” Orner writes. “Life in Hot Pink is raw, messy, yet replete with moments of awkward grace.”

SAIC alumna and faculty member Molly Zuckerman-Hartung (Painting and Drawing) opens her BMO Harris Bank Chicago Works solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) on May 1. The MCA’s overview notes Zuckerman-Hartung’s “innovative explorations of materials and process-based abstract painting make her one of Chicago’s most promising emerging artists.” Zuckerman-Hartung is just the third artist to be featured in the MCA’s new exhibition series, following fellow SAIC faculty member Scott Reeder (Painting and Drawing) and Laura Letinsky.

Performance faculty member Roberto Sifuentes and his company La Pocha Nostra have received a $15,000 grant from The Map Fund, a program of Creative Capital supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The funding will support the creation of a new work titled Psycho-Magic Actions for a World Gone Wrong, a work that “tries to make sense of the current culture of far-right isolationism, xenophobia, and the violence of organized crime.”

The newly formed Dallas Biennial will feature Peers, a new work by SAIC faculty member Lou Mallozzi (Sound), at the Texas Theater on May 31. This 33-minute piece is composed of 12 narrators reciting everything Lee Harvey Oswald said from the moment Kennedy was shot until Oswald’s demise at the hands of Jack Ruby. Mallozzi notes in his blog that showing at the Texas Theater is “highly appropriate” as the Texas Theater was the scene of Oswald’s arrest. Peers will be presented in an evening of films including Bruce Conner’s Report and Robert Smithson’s Spiral Jetty.

SAIC faculty member Mary Patten (FVNMA) was recently interviewed by Chicago’s weekly Windy City Times about her latest book, Revolution as an Eternal Dream: The Exemplary Failure of the Madame Binh Graphics Collective (Half Letter Press). The current issue of Afterimage (March/April 2012) also includes a short review of the book by Daniel Tucker.
About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago
A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) offers nationally accredited undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate programs to nearly 3,200 students from around the globe. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields. SAIC’s resources include the Art Institute of Chicago and its new Modern Wing; numerous special collections and programming venues provide students with exceptional exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and performances. For more information, please visit saic.edu.