

PRESS RELEASE

KIM CONATY NAMED CHIEF CURATOR AT THE WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART



New York, NY, April 3, 2024 — The Whitney Museum of American Art has named Kim Conaty the Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator. In this new role, effective April 8, Conaty will serve on the Museum’s senior leadership team and participate in shaping its mission and vision. She will oversee the Museum’s curatorial, publications, and conservation departments and assume responsibility for the Museum’s scholarly and artistic program while managing the development of the Museum’s permanent collection and exhibitions.

Conaty has worked at the Whitney since 2017 as the Steven and Ann Ames Curator of Drawings and Prints and recently curated the landmark exhibition *Edward Hopper’s New York* (2022), one of the most popular and critically acclaimed exhibitions in the Museum’s history. Other Whitney exhibitions include *Mary Corse: A Survey in Light* (2018), *Nothing Is So Humble: Prints from Everyday Objects* (2020), and *Ruth Asawa Through Line* (2023), the first survey of Asawa’s drawing practice. Conaty’s latest exhibition [Survival Piece #5: Portable Orchard](#), featuring a major example of 1970s environmental art, opens June 29, 2024, at the Whitney.

In addition to developing leading exhibitions and best-selling catalogues, Conaty also co-directed the development of the Whitney's Collection Strategic Plan (CSP), a multi-year research initiative to comprehensively assess the Museum's collection of more than 26,000 works and set priorities for its future. In 2023, with the CSP in place, the Whitney acquired 286 works, including 57 new artists, with a focus on underrepresented areas. As Curator of Drawings and Prints, Conaty has stewarded the Whitney's holdings of over 15,000 drawings and prints, led the programming of the Whitney's Sondra Gilman Study Center for prints, drawings, and photographs, and steers the Museum's Acquisition Committee on Drawings and Prints. She currently serves on the Board of Directors at the Print Council of America (PCA) and plays an active role on its DEAI Committee.

With this appointment following an international search, Conaty joins the Museum's senior leadership team, led by Alice Pratt Brown Director Scott Rothkopf. Other members include Deputy Director I.D. Aruede, Chief Operating Officer Amy Roth, and Chief Strategy Officer Andrew Cone.

"Kim brings to the role of Chief Curator an extraordinary range of talents. Her brilliance as an exhibition maker is matched by her deep scholarly expertise across the range of the Whitney's program and collection from 1900 to the present," said Scott Rothkopf, Alice Pratt Brown Director of the Whitney. "Beyond the Whitney, Kim has contributed generously to the entire museum field as a colleague and mentor, while demonstrating great care for our staff, artists, and audiences. I am thrilled to partner with her—and the entire curatorial team—on the artistic vision for the Whitney's future."

"It's a great honor to take on this leadership role at the Whitney, an institution that has long held a special place for me," said Conaty. "I'm excited to guide and empower our stellar curatorial team as we continue to shape the Whitney's collection in meaningful ways and develop dynamic and rigorous exhibitions that tell stories, ask questions, and engage deeply with artists and audiences."

Conaty's Whitney exhibitions have traveled nationally and internationally, including the 2019 presentation of *Mary Corse: A Survey in Light* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the first-ever exhibition of Edward Hopper's work in Korea, *Edward Hopper: From City to Coast* (2023), organized in conjunction with Seoul Museum of Art. *Ruth Asawa Through Line* was co-organized with the Menil Collection, where the exhibition is currently on view. Earlier in her career, Conaty also served as Biennial Coordinator for the 2008 Whitney Biennial and as a curatorial intern and researcher at the Whitney.

Prior to the Whitney, Conaty was Curator at the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University, where she oversaw the museum's renowned permanent collection of modern and contemporary art and led the curatorial program of special exhibitions, collection installations, and related programming. There, she organized several exhibitions, including *Sharon Lockhart I Noa Eshkol* (2016) and *David Shrigley: Life Model II* (2016); commissioned the major site-specific installation *Tony Lewis: Plunder* (2017); and served as coordinating curator for the first U.S. solo museum exhibition of Joe Bradley, *Joe Bradley: A Survey* (2017). While at the Rose, Conaty

also curated an exhibition for Art + Practice, Los Angeles, *Fred Eversley: Black, White, Gray* (2016), a focused examination of the artist's critically important monochromatic sculptures of the 1970s, which opened at A+P and traveled to the Rose.

Before joining the Rose, Conaty served as the Sue and Eugene Mercy, Jr., Assistant Curator in the Department of Drawings and Prints at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. There, she curated *Abstract Generation: Now in Print* (2013) and served as curatorial assistant on the exhibition *Print/Out* (2012), both of which proposed a new range of approaches to contemporary print practice. At MoMA, she also collaborated on several exhibitions of postwar and contemporary art, such as *Marcel Broodthaers: Retrospective* (2016), *Contemporary Art from the Collection* (2010), *Fluxus Preview* (2009), and *In & Out of Amsterdam: Travels in Conceptual Art, 1960–1976* (2009), among others. In addition to growing the collection with works by artists including Daniel Joseph Martinez, Janice Kerbel, and Pope.L, Conaty led a project team dedicated to MoMA's Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection and was an active member of the cross departmental research initiative C-MAP (Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives in a Global Context).

Conaty has also held positions at the Clark Art Institute; the Grey Art Gallery, NYU; the Guggenheim Museum; and the Harvard Art Museums, where she organized an exhibition on Marcel Breuer's bent-plywood furniture from the 1930s (2002). A former instructor on modern and contemporary art for MoMA Courses and contributor to several publications, Conaty has authored texts for, among others, the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, LACMA, MoMA, and the Whitney, and has published and lectured on a variety of topics, including Joe Bradley, Wade Guyton, Nadia Kaabi-Linke, Stanley Whitney, and *Avalanche* magazine, the subject of her Ph.D. dissertation. A recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship to Germany in 2003 and a Clark Art Institute Summer Fellowship in 2014, Conaty earned her B.A. from Middlebury College, M.A. from Williams College, and Ph.D. from NYU's Institute of Fine Arts.

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ABOUT THE WHITNEY

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney’s mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning “island of many hills.” The Museum’s current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Saponckanikan (“tobacco field”). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region’s original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum’s Land Acknowledgment, [visit the Museum’s website](#).

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors eighteen years and under and Whitney members: FREE. The Museum offers FREE admission and special programming for visitors of all ages every Friday evening from 5–10 pm and on the second Sunday of every month.

Image credit:

Kim Conaty. Photograph by Bryan Derballa

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