

# WHITNEY

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# PRESS RELEASE



David Breslin. Photograph by Lili Holzer-Glier

## DAVID BRESLIN TO JOIN THE WHITNEY'S CURATORIAL DEPARTMENT

**NEW YORK, September 16, 2016** – The Whitney Museum of American Art is pleased to announce that David Breslin is joining the Museum's staff as DeMartini Family Curator and Director of the Collection. Currently the John R. Eckel, Jr. Chief Curator of the Menil Drawing Institute in Houston, Breslin will begin working at the Whitney in October.

Scott Rothkopf, Deputy Director for Programs and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator, noted: "David is that rare and remarkable combination of a scholarly curator and sensitive champion of living artists. In his leadership position at the Whitney, he will help steward our collection and shape its future by guiding acquisition strategy, along with the display and publication of our holdings. We are delighted that David will further the Museum's mission as a forum for artists and the most innovative ideas around 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century American art."

At the Menil Drawing Institute, Breslin created an ambitious program of exhibitions and public and scholarly events and helped to shape the design of the Institute's stand-alone facility set to open next year. At the Menil, Breslin curated *The Precarious* (2015–2016), a focused look at works in the collection indebted to the collage tradition, and *Harold Ancart: There Is No There There* (2016). He also oversaw work on the catalogue raisonné of the drawings of Jasper Johns set to be published in 2017 and grew the collection with acquisitions of works by artists including, among others, Trisha Brown, John Cage, Lee Mullican, Amy Sillman, Nancy Spero, Danh Vo, and Jack Whitten. Breslin currently serves as co-curator with Whitney curator David Kiehl of *David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night*, an authoritative retrospective of the artist to be presented at the Whitney in 2018. Breslin and Kiehl are co-editing the accompanying catalogue.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the Whitney at such an exciting and important time, shortly after the first anniversary of the Museum's move downtown," said Breslin. "It is an honor to be able to work with this dynamic and growing collection and help convey the diverse histories and possibilities of American art. I

look forward to working with the Whitney’s exceptional staff—and thoughtful audiences—to create exhibitions and programs that challenge conceptions, inform interpretations, and, hopefully, provide some joy.”

Prior to joining the Menil Collection, Breslin served as the associate director of the research and academic program and associate curator of contemporary projects at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA. As associate director, Breslin partnered with international museum and academic colleagues to create a conference, colloquium, and symposium program for the museum; he also oversaw the Clark’s residential fellowship program and taught in the Williams College Graduate Program in the History of Art. Breslin co-edited *Art History and Emergency: Crises in the Visual Arts and Humanities* (Yale University Press, 2016), a volume that grew from a Clark Conference he organized with art historian Darby English.

In 2014, the Clark presented Breslin’s exhibition *Raw Color: The Circles of David Smith*. He also co-curated *Make It New: Abstract Painting from the National Gallery of Art, 1950-1975*. Most recently, Breslin worked on the Ellsworth Kelly-curated exhibition *Monet | Kelly* (seen at the Clark in 2015). In addition to curating exhibitions on El Anatsui and Juan Muñoz, among others, Breslin has edited numerous exhibition catalogues and authored essays on a range of artists including Paul Thek, Cady Noland, Valentin Carron, and Pablo Picasso.

Breslin earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Amherst College, a master’s in art history from Williams College, and a Ph.D. in the history of art and architecture from Harvard University. His doctoral dissertation, *I WANT TO GO TO THE FUTURE: Jenny Holzer and the End of a Century*, was informed by his experience working in Holzer’s studio, collaborating with the artist on many museum and gallery exhibitions – including Holzer’s 2009 exhibition at the Whitney – and organizing a diverse range of public projects. He was appointed to serve as an adviser in contemporary art initiatives at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, MA, while pursuing his doctorate.

### **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 at a time 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 more than eighty 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 themselves, 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.

### **Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art**

<i>Human Interest: Portraits from the Whitney’s Collection</i>	Through Feb 12, 2017
<i>Stuart Davis: In Full Swing</i>	Through Sept 25, 2016
<i>Virginia Overton: Sculpture Gardens</i>	Through Sept 25, 2016
<i>Danny Lyon: Message to the Future</i>	Through Sept 25, 2016
<i>Sophia Al-Maria: Black Friday</i>	Through Oct 31, 2016
<i>Carmen Herrera: Lines of Sight</i>	Through Jan 2, 2017
<i>Dreamlands: Immersive Cinema and Art, 1905–2016</i>	Oct 28, 2016–Feb 5, 2017
<i>Virginia Overton: Winter Garden</i>	Oct 28, 2016– Feb 5, 2017
<i>RED IN VIEW</i>	Nov 11, 2016 – Feb 27, 2017
<i>Whitney Biennial</i>	Spring 2017
<i>David Wojnarowicz: History Keeps Me Awake at Night</i>	Summer 2018

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Museum hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday from 10:30 am to 6 pm; Friday and Saturday from 10:30 am to 10 pm. Closed Tuesday. Adults: \$22 in advance via [whitney.org](http://whitney.org); \$25 day of visit. Full-time students and visitors 65 & over: \$17 in advance via [whitney.org](http://whitney.org); \$18 day of visit. Visitors 18 years & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit [whitney.org](http://whitney.org).

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