

PETER GALASSI TO RETIRE FROM THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AFTER 30 YEARS

New York, April 29, 2011 – Peter Galassi, The Joel and Anne Ehrenkranz Chief Curator of the Department of Photography at The Museum of Modern Art, will retire from that position in July, it was announced today by MoMA’s Director, Glenn D. Lowry. Mr. Galassi served as a curatorial intern in the Department of Photography in 1974-75, rejoined the Department’s staff in 1981, and was appointed Chief Curator in 1991. After completing a sabbatical that ends in June, Mr. Galassi will leave the Museum to devote time to writing and other projects.

“Over the course of his long career at The Museum of Modern Art, Peter Galassi has applied passion, commitment, and exemplary scholarship to further our understanding of photography as an art form that is central to modern and contemporary art,” said Glenn D. Lowry. “In addition to curating many important exhibitions and authoring publications, he has led the growth and transformation of MoMA’s photography collection. The Museum is most grateful for those contributions, and we wish him all the best in the next phase of his career.”

Mr. Galassi has organized or co-organized more than 40 exhibitions and countless collection displays at the Museum. Many of the exhibitions have been accompanied by major publications, including *Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Modern Century* (2010), *Jeff Wall* (2007), *Friedlander* (2005), *Andreas Gursky* (2001), *Walker Evans & Company* (2000), *Aleksandr Rodchenko* (1998, with Magdalena Dabrowski and Leah Dickerman), *Roy DeCarava: A Retrospective* (1996), *Pleasures and Terrors of Domestic Comfort* (1991), *Nicholas Nixon: Pictures of People* (1988), *Henri Cartier-Bresson: The Early Work* (1987), and *Before Photography: Painting and the Invention of Photography* (1981).

In 2000, Mr. Galassi and his colleagues Robert Storr and Anne Umland led a team of 16 curators in presenting the 24 exhibitions comprising *Making Choices*, the second of three cycles of exhibitions marking the turn of the century, all drawn from the Museum’s collection. For the reopening of the Museum in 2004, Mr. Galassi oversaw the reinstallation of the Edward Steichen Photography Galleries and the creation of a state-of-the art storage vault for the photography collection.

Among the Department of Photography’s important acquisitions during Mr. Galassi’s tenure as Chief Curator are more than 1,000 photographs spanning the career of Lee Friedlander, the complete series of Cindy Sherman’s *Untitled Film Stills*, some 300 news photographs given by The New York Times, more than 300 outstanding modernist photographs of the 1920s and 1930s from the Thomas Walther Collection, and key examples of mid-nineteenth-century French photography bequeathed by Suzanne Winsberg. In 1991, working closely with the Trustee Committee on Photography and his curatorial colleagues, Mr. Galassi initiated an acquisitions

program focused on postwar photography, which has brought to the Museum important groups of works by Robert Adams, Diane Arbus, Richard Avedon, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Robert Frank, David Goldblatt, Nan Goldin, Jan Groover, Andreas Gursky, Boris Mikhailov, Nicholas Nixon, Michael Schmidt, Judith Joy Ross, Joel Sternfeld, Thomas Struth, Jeff Wall, William Wegman, and Garry Winogrand.

Mr. Galassi is also the author of *Philip-Lorca diCorcia* (MoMA, 1995) and *Corot in Italy: Open-Air Painting and the Classical Landscape Tradition* (Yale University Press, 1991). In 1996 he was co-curator of the exhibition *In the Light of Italy: Corot and Early Open-Air Painting* at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

The Museum will begin a search for a new Chief Curator of Photography in the coming months.

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