MARK BRADFORD TO REPRESENT UNITED STATES
at 57th VENICE BIENNALE IN 2017

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Presented by the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University
Commissioner and Co-Curator: Christopher Bedford, Director of the Rose Art Museum
Co-Curator: Katy Siegel, Curator at Large for the Rose Art Museum
and Chair in Modern American Art at Stony Brook University

(Waltham, MA) – The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is pleased to announce that Mark Bradford will be the representative for the United States at La Biennale di Venezia 57th International Art Exhibition, the world’s most prestigious contemporary art event. Bradford, one of today’s leading international artists, is known for his work across media inspiring cross-cultural dialogue on social, political, and economic issues facing underserved urban communities. He will create a new site-specific installation for the U.S. Pavilion in Venice, Italy, to be on view May 13–November 26, 2017. The U.S. Pavilion is commissioned and co-curated by Christopher Bedford, the Henry and Lois Foster Director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass, and Katy Siegel,
The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University is honored to present the work of Mark Bradford as the official United States Representative to the 2017 Venice Biennale,” commented Bedford. “As the leading American abstract painter of his generation and a vigorous advocate for the interests of underrepresented urban communities in the U.S. and beyond, Bradford creates work that embodies art’s capacity to both inspire wonder and catalyze enduring social change. Similarly, the Rose’s renowned collection of postwar art is rooted in a commitment to material invention and expanding knowledge through culture, while Brandeis’s investment in social justice as a core value permeates the work of every teaching and research unit of the University. It is with the greatest pleasure that we announce our collaboration with Mark Bradford: no artist could be better aligned with the character of our institution or better positioned to represent the United States in the 21st century.”

Based in Los Angeles, Mark Bradford’s sweeping canvases recapture mid-century American art’s capacity to conjure the sublime and evoke deep feeling, while incorporating layers of social comment. In parallel with his work in the studio, Bradford maintains a social practice, anchored by his Los Angeles-based not-for-profit, Art + Practice, an educational platform that emphasizes practical skills for foster youth and stresses the cultural importance of art within a larger social context. These equivalent commitments to formal invention and social activism anchor Bradford’s contribution to culture at large, embodying his belief that contemporary artists can reinvent the world we share.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Mark Bradford was born in 1961 in Los Angeles, where he lives and works. He received a BFA (1995) and MFA (1997) from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia. Best known for his large-scale abstract paintings that examine the class-, race-, and gender-based economies that structure urban society in the United States, Bradford’s richly layered and collaged canvases represent a connection to the social world through materials. Bradford uses fragments of found posters, billboards, newsprint and custom printed paper to simultaneously engage with and advance the formal traditions of abstract painting.

Solo exhibitions include Scorched Earth at the Hammer Museum (2015), Sea Monsters at the Rose Art Museum (2014), Aspen Art Museum (2011), Maps and Manifests at Cincinnati Art Museum (2008), and Neither New Nor Correct at the Whitney Museum of American Art (2007). In 2009, Mark Bradford was the recipient of the MacArthur Foundation ‘Genius’ Award. In 2010, Mark Bradford, a large-scale survey of his work, was organized by Christopher Bedford and presented at the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, before traveling to the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Dallas Museum of Art; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

His work has been widely exhibited and has been included in group shows at LACMA Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2014), Whitney Museum of American Art (2013), the 12th Istanbul Biennial (2011), Seoul Biennial (2010), the Carnegie International (2008), São Paulo Biennial (2006), and Whitney Biennial (2006).

ABOUT THE CURATORS

Rose Art Museum Curator at Large and Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw Endowed Chair in Modern American Art, Stony Brook University. Bradford’s exhibition at the U.S. Pavilion will be the first Venice Biennale project presented by the Rose Art Museum.
Christopher Bedford is the Henry and Lois Foster Director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Since joining the Rose in September of 2012, he has organized exhibitions by Walead Beshty, Mark Bradford, Mika Rottenberg and Lisa Yuskavage, in addition to commissioning Chris Burden’s permanent outdoor site-specific sculpture Light of Reason, and implementing the new initiatives Rose Projects, Rose Video and Rosebud. Prior to joining the Rose, Bedford was Chief Curator at the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University in Columbus, where he organized numerous exhibitions including Hard Targets, a multimedia show exploring sports and masculinity, and Mark Bradford, a major mid-career survey of the Los Angeles-based artist. Major monographic exhibitions organized for the Wexner include Paula Hayes, Sarah Morris, David Smith, Omer Fast, and Paul Sietsema. Prior to joining the Wexner, Bedford was assistant curator at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) in the Department of Contemporary Art; and curatorial assistant and then consulting curator in the Department of Sculpture and Decorative Arts at The J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. Bedford has published essays, book reviews, editorials, and exhibition reviews in numerous publications including Artforum, Art in America, frieze, The Art Book, The Burlington Magazine, Afterall, and October. Bedford holds a B.A. in art history from Oberlin College and an M.A. in art history from Case Western Reserve University.

Katy Siegel is the inaugural Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw Endowed Chair in Modern American Art at Stony Brook University. Previously she was Professor of Art History at Hunter College, CUNY; she has also taught at Princeton and Yale universities. Her most recent book is “The heroine Paint”: After Frankenthaler. Her other books include Since ’45: America and the Making of Contemporary Art and Abstract Expressionism. She has written for numerous institutions internationally, on artists including Wols, Georg Baselitz, Mark Bradford, Norman Lewis, Mary Weatherford, Al Loving, David Reed, Andrea Bowers, Sharon Lockhart, Alex Katz, and Robert Rauschenberg. Siegel is a contributing editor at Artforum and a consulting editor at The Brooklyn Rail; from 2010-2013 she was the editor in chief of Art Journal. In her position as Curator at Large at the Rose Art Museum, she has curated a number of exhibitions, including Pretty Raw: After and Around Helen Frankenthaler, Light Years: Jack Whitten, 1971-1974, 1914: Magnus Plessen, The Matter that surrounds Us: Wols and Charline von Heyl, and Rosalyn Drexler: Who Does She Think She Is?, which will travel to the Albright-Knox Art Gallery following its Rose presentation. Other curated exhibitions include High Times Hard Times: New York Painting, 1967-75, which toured internationally to critical acclaim. She is the co-curator with Okwui Enwezor and Ulrich Wilmes of Postwar: Art Between the Pacific and the Atlantic, 1945-1965, opening at the Haus der Kunst, Munich, October 2016.

ABOUT THE ROSE ART MUSEUM AT BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1961, the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University is an educational and cultural institution dedicated to collecting, preserving and exhibiting the finest of modern and contemporary art. The programs of the Rose adhere to the overall mission of the university, embracing its values of academic excellence, social justice and freedom of expression. The museum’s permanent collection of postwar and contemporary art is unequalled in New England and is among the best at any university art museum in the United States. For more information, visit www.brandeis.edu/rose/.

ABOUT LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA

The Venice Biennale dates to 1895, when the first International Art Exhibition was organized. It is one of the most important international biennials and cultural institutions in the world, introducing hundreds of thousands of visitors to exciting new art every two years. The 57th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (May 13-November 26, 2017) is directed by Christine Macel, Chief Curator at
ABOUT THE U.S. PAVILION

The United States Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, a building in the neo-classical style, opened on May 4, 1930. Since 1986, The U.S. Pavilion has been owned by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and managed by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, which works closely with the Department of State and exhibition curators to install and maintain all official U.S. exhibitions presented in the Pavilion. Every two years, museum curators from across the U.S. detail their visions for the U.S. Pavilion in proposals that are reviewed by the NEA Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions (FACIE), a group comprising curators, museum directors, and artists who then submit their recommendations to the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Past exhibitions can be viewed on the Peggy Guggenheim Collection website at: www.guggenheim-venice.it/inglese/pavilion/index.php

ABOUT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) builds relations between the people of the United States and the people of other countries through academic, cultural, sports, professional and private exchanges, as well as public-private partnerships and mentoring programs. These exchange programs improve foreign relations and strengthen the national security of the United States, support U.S. international leadership, and provide a broad range of domestic benefits by helping break down barriers that often divide us, like religion, politics, language and ethnicity, and geography. ECA programs build connections that engage and empower people, and motivate them to become leaders and thinkers; to develop new skills; and to find connections that will create positive change in their communities. For more information, visit www.exchanges.state.gov/us

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For further information about the Rose Art Museum, please visit www.roseartmuseum.org