

MILLS

PRESS RELEASE

Contacts:

Dru Anderson

Mills College Art Museum Publicity Assistant

510.430.2164 or danderson@mills.edu

Lori Chinn

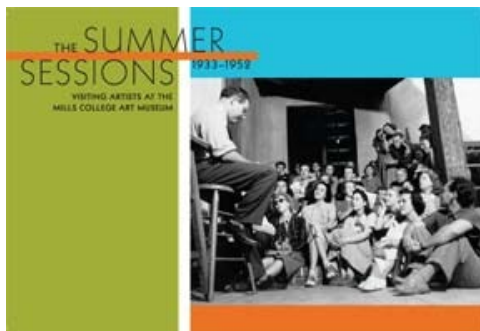
Mills College Art Museum Program Manager

510.430.3340 or lchinn@mills.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 17, 2011

Mills College Art Museum Presents *The Summer Sessions 1933–1952: Visiting Artists at the Mills College Art Museum*



Oakland, CA—May 17, 2011. The Mills College Art Museum is pleased to present *The Summer Sessions 1933–1952: Visiting Artists at the Mills College Art Museum* curated by Dr. Stephanie Hanor and the Mills College Museum Studies Workshop, on view from June 15 through August 28, 2011. A gallery talk by Peter Selz will take place on June 15 at 6:00 pm followed by a public reception in the Art Museum.

According to Hanor, “This exhibition demonstrates the extraordinary history of artistic innovation at Mills College. It is particularly meaningful for Mills students to have the opportunity to research and curate this significant period of the Mills College Art Museum for Bay Area audiences.”

The exhibition will examine the museum’s significant role in the introduction of European modernist artists and their practices to the San Francisco Bay Area during the period surrounding World War II. From 1933 to 1952, under the direction of the noted German art historian Alfred Neumeyer, the Mills College Art Museum participated in the “Summer Sessions,” a series of classes and workshops in which distinguished contemporary European, Latin American, and American artists were invited to the College to teach and exhibit work.

The museum was a pioneer in its choice of avant-garde artists for the Summer Sessions program, which included sculptor Alexander Archipenko; painters Max Beckmann, Lyonel Feininger, and Fernand Léger; and Latin American artists Antonio Sotomayor and José Perotti. In the summer of 1940, faculty members from the School of Design in Chicago, the newly reformed Bauhaus directed by László Moholy-Nagy, designed and taught that year’s Summer Session. As a direct result of the program, the museum organized the first exhibition of Feininger’s work in the United States (1936) and major exhibitions by Léger (1941), Moholy-Nagy and the Bauhaus (1940), and Beckmann (1950).

Using approximately 40 paintings, photographs, prints, and drawings from the museum’s collections and archives, the Summer Sessions exhibition will provide new scholarship on the

role these artists played in Northern California, describe a vital chapter in the history of the Mills College Art Museum, and expose new audiences to an important group of works in the museum's permanent collection.

The Museum Studies Workshop is a course taught in the Art History Program at Mills College encompassing both the theoretical and practical study of museums in historical and contemporary contexts. The members of this year's class are: Alyssa Ilves, Mia Malotte, Elizabeth Mauerman, Jennifer Nicholson, Meri Page, Rachel Reyes, Hazel Rogers, Mika Rosen, and Jessica Tang.

Image: *László Moholy-Nagy Teaching at Mills College*, 1940. Gelatin silver print. Collection MCAM, Gift of Eugene and Martha Bielawski in honor of their daughter, Toby Bielawski. Photo: Romeo Rolette

Public Programs:

Wednesday, June 15, 6:00–8:00 pm, Art Museum

Gallery Talk by Peter Selz, Professor Emeritus of Art History, UC Berkeley

Opening reception to follow in the Art Museum

Sunday, July 24, 3:00–5:00 pm, Art Museum

Family Arts Workshop and Tours of The Summer Sessions

Saturday, August 27, 6:00–8:00 pm, Danforth Lecture Hall

Lecture by Bert Gordon, Professor of History, Mills College

Closing reception to follow in the Art Museum

Press about Summer Sessions:

[‘Summer Sessions’ shows Mills College art program](#) by Kenneth Baker, San Francisco Chronicle

About the Mills College Art Museum

Founded in 1925, The Mills College Art Museum is a forum for exploring art and ideas and a laboratory for contemporary art practices. Through innovative exhibitions, programs, and collections, the museum engages and inspires the intellectual and creative life of the Mills community as well as the diverse audiences of the Bay Area and beyond. The Mills College Art Museum is located at 5000 MacArthur Boulevard, Oakland, CA 94613. Museum hours are Tuesday-Sunday 11:00–4:00 pm and Wednesday 11:00–7:30 pm. Admission is free for all exhibitions and programs unless noted. For more information, visit <http://mcam.mills.edu>

About Mills College

Nestled in the foothills of Oakland, California, Mills College is a nationally renowned, independent liberal arts college offering a dynamic progressive education that fosters leadership, social responsibility, and creativity to over 950 undergraduate women and more than 600 graduate women and men. The College ranks as one of the *Best 373 Colleges* in the country and one of the greenest colleges in the nation by The Princeton Review. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Mills one of the top-tier regional universities in the country and second among colleges and universities in the West in its “Great Schools, Great Prices” category. For more information, visit <http://www.mills.edu>