



## **\$33 million Museum to Open at Buffalo State College**

*Gwathmey Siegel design showcases acclaimed regional art collection*

July 14, 2008 Buffalo, New York -- The new \$35 million Burchfield-Penney Art Center at Buffalo State College will open to the public on Saturday, November 22 with a 32-hour grand opening celebration. Designed by Gwathmey Siegel and Associates Architects, the contemporary, 84,000 sq. foot museum is located on the Buffalo State College (SUNY) campus in the heart of Buffalo's historic Museum District, which is also home to the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. The new museum features 19,000 square feet of galleries and more than 5,000 square feet of education and program space.

"This is an incredible moment for the Burchfield-Penney, Buffalo State College and the Western New York community," said Ted Pietrzak, director of the museum. "The new museum is testament to the strength of the Burchfield-Penney's mission, the art and artists of this Region and our ongoing collaboration with Buffalo State College."

The Burchfield-Penney holds a collection of more than 7,500 works of art and thousands of archival files representing the work of almost 600 artists. The museum is home to the largest public collection of works by Charles E. Burchfield (1893-1967), with more than 95 paintings plus 25,000 drawings and sketches, in addition to the country's most comprehensive archives about his art and career. Western New York artists represented in the museum's collections, in addition to Burchfield, include Elbert Hubbard, Gustav Stickley, Karl Kipp, Frank Lloyd Wright, Edwin Dickinson, Milton Rogovin, Marion Faller, Susan Rothenberg, Joseph Piccillo, Cindy Sherman, Robert Longo, Alberto Rey, and Paul Sharits, to name just a few.

Nine exhibitions of work from the Burchfield-Penney's collections will be on view as the museum opens in November. *Entering Burchfield's World* and *Burchfield's Seasons* will be featured in two galleries dedicated to the artist, the latter a circular gallery to feature the artists' paintings of the seasons; a wish that he wrote in his journals. The museum's 148' x 48' x 28' east gallery will host *Gateways* and will include contemporary work in all media: sculpture, representational and non-representational painting, photography, drawings, prints, video and mixed media installations. Paul Sharits' bicentennial film *Declarative Mode* will be on view in the museum's project space as will highlights of the museum's craft, sculpture and photography collections.

The Burchfield-Penney's mission also underscores the importance of education and the museum experience. Located on the campus of Buffalo State College (SUNY), the organization will play a unique role in education and student life. College departments, including art conservation, art, design, art education and museum studies, as well as other disciplines, will study, intern and volunteer within the new museum providing a sort of museum "learning laboratory." In addition, education programs for the community will highlight the museum's public programming.

### **The New Museum**

The campaign for a new museum for the Burchfield Penney began in 1998 with a gift of \$1 million. A location at the corner of Elmwood Avenue and Rockwell Road, across the street from the internationally renowned Albright Knox Art Gallery and adjacent to the Buffalo State College campus with a backdrop of the imposing towers of H.H. Richardson's Buffalo State Hospital, was acquired for the new museum.

More than 300 members of the Western New York community participated in a study which determined what the new museum should be for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a document which informed which informed the final design.

The firm of Gwathmey Siegel and Associates Architects was selected in a competitive process from 16 proposals from architects across the United States. What resulted is a museum which combines the ability to exhibit, collect and conserve art with an experience which is very visitor-centric.

The two-story museum makes a dramatic aesthetic statement externally with carefully selected materials and with a deliberate color palette. Inside, long, dramatic vistas and open spaces with purposeful contraction and expansion of ceiling heights are experienced. A long concourse that contains an 80-foot staircase is illuminated by four massive skylights. It serves as a gathering space while connecting the program areas with visitor service amenities.

The building is highly functional and combines related program components, strategic design of physical spaces, and a straightforward circulation system. Galleries are

provided for collections as well as flexible, changing exhibitions. An auditorium, classrooms, museum store and café are located off the entry lobby on the first floor. The public reception room on the second floor borders an outdoor terrace. The boardroom and museum offices are accessible on the second floor via the grand staircase or elevator. Storage and service spaces are distributed on the first and second floors, providing critical adjacencies, but separating these functions from the public domain.

Features of the new museum include:

- East Gallery, measuring 148' x 48' with 28' ceiling heights.
- Glass enclosed cantilevered reception area which overlooks feature gallery
- Circular gallery designed to fulfill the wish of Charles E. Burchfield, that his paintings of the seasons, and the transitions of the seasons, would be shown as continuous.
- Art conservation laboratory specializing in the care of works on paper.
- LEED certification to the silver level and participant in the New York State EnergySmart program.

“Buffalo has a rich architectural heritage stemming from its place as one of the richest cities in the nation at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and H.H. Richardson among others all created masterpieces in this city,” said Cindy Abbott Letro, chair of the Burchfield-Penney Board of Trustees. “Creating a museum which would be true to this legacy was an important consideration in the design of this new museum.”

### **Inaugural Exhibitions**

#### ***Entering Burchfield's World***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, March 1, 2009**

*Entering Burchfield's World* will feature significant works from the Burchfield-Penney's collection of Charles E. Burchfield's art and archives and will feature highlights from Of special note, several works that have never before been shown in public will illustrate his traditional, yet unique methodology for gathering visual information and constructing paintings.

#### ***Burchfield's Seasons***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, March 1, 2009**

In 1964 Charles E. Burchfield wrote in his journals that he wanted “a circular museum” that would be large enough to house his season transitions. The artist's wishes will finally be realized in this exhibition. The perennial season cycle will include a circular display of some of his favorite paintings of winter, spring, summer and fall as he desired.

#### ***Gateway: Selections from the Collection***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, April 19, 2009**

The exhibition will feature contemporary work from the Burchfield-Penney's collection. The exhibition will include all media: sculpture, representational and non-representational painting, photography, drawings, prints, video and mixed media installations and includes work by Cindy Sherman, Robert Longo, John Pfahl, Russell Drisch, and Richard Hirsch.

***The Art of Western New York: A Historical Context***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, September 27, 2009**

When the Erie Canal opened in 1825, it connected Albany and the Hudson River with Buffalo, creating one of the country's most significant trade routes for transporting grain and goods from the Northeast to the Midwest and beyond. Change also permeated the arts in this region, illustrated by a continuum started by itinerant portrait painters that developed into societies, art schools, and supportive organizations that brought artists together, resulting in the vibrant arts community that we exemplify today. This exhibition will feature many of the historically important works from the collection that demonstrate the breadth of artistic achievement in Buffalo and the Niagara Region. The oldest painting in the museum's collection will be on view - dating from 1875: *Near Portage, New York* by Hamilton Hamilton. Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century art will include paintings, drawings and prints as well as decorative arts by Roycroft artisans.

***Photo-Pictorialists of Buffalo***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, April 4, 2009**

In April 1906, eight members broke away from the Buffalo Camera Club to found their own group to advance Pictorial photography. Having been inspired by New York artist Alfred Stieglitz and his Photo-Secession, they held similar goals to achieve artistic legitimacy for the new medium by creating photographs that exhibited many of the same characteristics associated with painting. They manipulated images to achieve atmospheric, Impressionist qualities, even to the extent of applying soft, pastel colors to their photographic prints. Their subject matter also aligned with academic paintings of the late 19th century, such as landscapes, Romantic views of peasants, and portraits. It will feature works by original members of the Photo-Pictorialists of Buffalo, such as Wilbur H. Porterfield and Edward B. Sides, as well as later members and photographers who worked in the Pictorialist style, including Augustus Jackson Thibaudeau, Charlotte Spaulding Albright, Rose Clark, Eleck F. Hall and Clara E. Sipprell.

***Milton Rogovin: Appalachia Revisited***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, April 19, 2009**

Social-Documentary photographer Milton Rogovin has earned a national reputation by travelling to numerous countries to photograph working people and their families, people he refers to as "the forgotten ones." His images have raised public consciousness worldwide to the difficult conditions in which so many live and work by presenting his subjects with dignity while still revealing the austerity of their lives. Rogovin's photographs, which have been exhibited and published world-wide, are included in major collections outside of Buffalo in the Library of Congress, J. Paul Getty Museum,

and Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona. Selections from the Burchfield-Penney Milton Rogovin Collection, which is the second largest in the world, will focus on his early study of coal miners, not only in rural Appalachia, but around the world.

***Declarative Mode: Paul Sharits' Bicentennial Film***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, March 1, 2009**

In 1776, Thomas Jefferson included in his draft of the Declaration of Independence a denunciation of slavery. However, this visionary passage was deleted from the final draft of the document by Congress. Paul Sharits' film, *Declarative Mode* (1976), attempts to celebrate the spirit and dynamism of Jefferson's adamant declaration of human liberty for all races in pure rhythms. Two identical prints are shown simultaneously, one inside the image of the other; the inner image is projected out of sync one second in advance of the larger image; this creates interplay between the prints resulting in a dynamic phenomenon. The film was produced with the assistance of a Bicentennial Film grant awarded jointly by the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts.

***Artistry in Clay, Fiber, Glass, Metal, and Wood***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, March 1, 2009**

The Burchfield-Penney Art Center is the only collecting institution in Western New York to focus seriously on the exhibition, collection and interpretation of art in craft media. Stellar pieces have been acquired over the institution's forty-one year history to represent the best examples of artworks composed with clay, fiber, glass, metal, and wood. Featured artists will include Bill Stewart, Wayne Higby, Gail McCarthy, Daisy Anderson, Nancy Belfer, John McQueen, Jackie Pancari, Alex Bernstein, Albert R. Paley, Jr., William Underhill, Wendell Castle, and Taeyoung Ryu.

***In Rare Form: Western New York Sculpture***

**Friday, November 21, 2008 – Sunday, April 19, 2009**

Trained in the Beaux-Arts tradition in Paris and Boston, Charles Cary Rumsey worked in stone and bronze and secured several public commissions. He was developing an Art Deco approach before his untimely death in an automobile accident. In addition to showing bronze and stone sculpture by the gallery's eponymous artist, the inaugural exhibition in the Charles Cary Rumsey Gallery will survey the breadth of the collection to illustrate its diversity of artists and approaches to their media. It will include Native American sculptors who work with natural materials such as deer antler, Iroquois alabaster, and stoneware; contemporary artists working with steel or found objects, and sculptors who used ceramics for abstract or figurative works.

**About the Burchfield-Penney Art Center**

The Burchfield-Penney Art Center is a museum dedicated to the art and vision of Charles E. Burchfield and distinguished artists of Buffalo Niagara and Western New York State. Through its affiliation with Buffalo State College, the museum encourages learning and

celebrates our richly creative and diverse community. For more information, call (716) 878-6011 or visit [www.burchfield-penney.org](http://www.burchfield-penney.org).

### **About Buffalo State College**

The only State University of New York college located in a metropolitan area, Buffalo State College's 11,000 students enjoy tremendous advantages both on the 125-acre campus and throughout the community. Founded in 1871, Buffalo State is the largest four-year college in SUNY system, with more than 130 undergraduate and 44 graduate academic programs in the arts, sciences, education, and professional programs. For more information, visit [www.buffalostate.edu](http://www.buffalostate.edu).

### **About Gwathmey Siegel and Associates Architects**

Founded in 1968, Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects is a New York-based architecture firm offering master planning, architectural, interior and product design services. Gwathmey Siegel has completed over three hundred projects for corporate, educational, cultural, healthcare, government and private clients throughout the United States and abroad. The 65-person firm has an international reputation for architectural excellence, confirmed by more than 100 design awards, continuing recognition in the professional and general press, and inclusion in exhibitions and histories of contemporary architecture.

Gwathmey Siegel & Associates received the American Institute of Architects' highest honor, the Firm Award, for "approaching every project with a fresh eye, a meticulous attention to detail, a keen appreciation for environmental and economic concerns and a strong belief in collaborative effort."

The firm is well known for its holistic approach, that integrates interior design details and site related improvements as integral parts of the architectural solution.

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