

Foundation for Contemporary Arts

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FOUNDATION FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS ANNOUNCES
\$720,000 GIFT FROM THE ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG FOUNDATION
TO FORM AN
ANNUAL ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG AWARD;
INAUGURAL AWARD TO BE MADE TO CHOREOGRAPHER TRISHA BROWN**

New York, NY, January 15, 2013 – The Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA) is pleased to announce that The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation (RRF) and Estate have donated \$720,000 to FCA to set up a permanently endowed, \$25,000 annual grant in Robert Rauschenberg’s name—the *Robert Rauschenberg Award*.

The first endowment gift ever received by FCA, and the largest financial contribution in FCA’s fifty-year history, this prestigious award has been established to honor Robert Rauschenberg’s legacy of innovation, risk-taking and experimentation. Rauschenberg was one of FCA’s founding artists and most generous supporters. The *Robert Rauschenberg Award* will be awarded annually through FCA’s signature *Grants to Artists* program to an individual visual or performing artist in recognition of outstanding achievement that reflects the spirit of its namesake. The *Robert Rauschenberg Award* is the first endowed grant through this program and it is launched as FCA celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in 2013.

Established in 1993, *Grants to Artists* provides significant, unrestricted assistance to individual artists in all disciplines. Recipients are chosen annually through a confidential nomination and selection process. Once a year, a group of distinguished artists and arts professionals are invited to serve as nominators. A selection panel reviews nominations and chooses grantees on the basis of the merit and imaginativeness of their work and the effect such recognition and support might have at that point in their careers. Since 1993, FCA has disbursed over \$5 million through *Grants to Artists* to

– more –

236 artists working in the United States and abroad.

FCA is also pleased to announce that the inaugural *Robert Rauschenberg Award* will be awarded to choreographer Trisha Brown. It is fitting that the first recipient is Brown, who is one of the most creative, imaginative choreographers today and had a decades-long creative collaboration with Mr. Rauschenberg, who made sets, costumes and other work to support Brown's choreography.

Brown, who received early support from FCA in the 1970s, is widely known as the most acclaimed choreographer to emerge from the postmodern era. Her work is recognized as fluid, yet unpredictable, and her collaborations with visual artists are unparalleled. Brown began making dances with the Judson Dance Theater in the 1960s and has continued to create groundbreaking, thoughtful work to the present day. Her newest work *I'm going to toss my arms- if you catch them they're yours* (2011) will have its New York premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in January 2013.

"We imagine that Bob, who had a long friendship and working relationship with Trisha, would have been pleased to know that she is the first recipient of this award," said Christy MacLear, Executive Director of the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. "Throughout his life, Bob was devoted to helping and supporting artists and performers. An annual grant to an individual artist is a tremendous way to memorialize Bob's generosity toward other artists and a core part of our mission. The Rauschenberg Foundation wanted to work with a partner whose expertise is in direct grant funding to individual artists. Foundation for Contemporary Arts is the perfect partner through which to support individual artists as Bob contributed to this organization since its inception fifty years ago, and was in fact one of FCA's instigators."

"We are so pleased by this major contribution in honor of Robert Rauschenberg. Foundation for Contemporary Arts was founded by visual artists in a spirit of community, and Bob was involved in its genesis, donating one of the original artworks. It is especially meaningful to be able to award this first grant to Trisha Brown, whose work we have all admired and who was one of the first artists supported by FCA, in both 1971 and 1974," said Stacy Stark, Executive Director of Foundation for Contemporary Arts.

While the inaugural recipient of the *Robert Rauschenberg Award* has enjoyed a long, celebrated career in dance, subsequent annual awards will recognize emerging and mid-career artists in all disciplines whose work exemplifies the innovation and risk-taking of Rauschenberg's artistic practice.

About Foundation for Contemporary Arts (FCA)

Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts was conceived in 1963 by John Cage (1912-1992) and Jasper Johns. At that time, emerging visual artists were beginning to experience modest

financial success, while Cage and Merce Cunningham—and others working in dance, music and theater—struggled to find funding options to present their work. Cage, Johns, Rauschenberg and a few friends decided to organize a benefit exhibition to support these performing artists. Allan Stone, a prominent art dealer, contributed his gallery for the event in early 1963 and 67 artists gave 69 works to be sold. Believed to be one of the first-ever benefit exhibitions, Willem de Kooning, Alex Katz, Johns, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg, James Rosenquist, Frank Stella and Andy Warhol were among the contributors. With proceeds from this exhibition, the Foundation began providing grants for performing artists.

In the early 1990s, FCA chose to provide more significant sums to artists by awarding fewer, more substantial grants through a nomination process. It was at this time that FCA expanded its grant-making to include visual artists. Since 1993, hundreds of grants to artists and arts organizations—totaling nearly \$10 million—have provided opportunities for creative exploration and the realization of new work. To date, nearly 900 visual artists have made these grants possible by contributing paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints and photographs to the thirteen benefit exhibitions held over the years.

The current Directors of the Foundation for Contemporary Arts are Brooke Alexander, Robert Gober, Agnes Gund, Jasper Johns, Julian Lethbridge, Glenn Ligon, Kara Walker and T.J. Wilcox.
www.foundationforcontemporaryarts.org

About the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation (RRF)

Robert Rauschenberg Foundation was formed by Robert Rauschenberg in 1990 to promote awareness of the causes and groups close to his heart. Activities of the Foundation include managing the artwork, exhibition and scholarship of Robert Rauschenberg as well as the growth of the philanthropy programs which intersect art and issues central to Robert Rauschenberg's concerns during his lifetime. The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation's programs now include the new grant program for artistic innovation and collaboration, seed funding for artistic start-ups, problem-solving in core mission areas and direct assistance for the advancement of art. The Foundation's Vision, Mission and Strategy are coordinated to promote the founder's values and ensure that all endeavors express the essence of Robert Rauschenberg's legacy.

www.rauschenbergfoundation.org

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