

## Indianapolis Museum of Art Acquires Monumental Work by Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein

### *Landmark Sculpture Will Make World Premiere at IMA This August*

**INDIANAPOLIS**, June 30, 2014 – The Indianapolis Museum of Art has acquired *Five Brushstrokes*, a monumental work by Roy Lichtenstein, commissioned in the early 1980s but never before assembled. The work will be unveiled in its completion for the first time this August at the IMA. The sculpture is considered to be Lichtenstein's most ambitious work in his *Brushstroke* series. Consisting of five separate elements, the tallest of which soars 40 feet into the air, *Five Brushstrokes* features a striking collection of forms and colors and is one of Lichtenstein's premier 'scatter pieces'. Installed on The Dudley and Mary Louise Sutphin Mall in front of the main museum building, *Five Brushstrokes* will be a prominent new addition to the IMA's celebrated outdoor sculpture program and an awe-inspiring welcome to IMA visitors.

"We have been working in partnership with the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation in New York for over a year to bring this iconic work of art to Indianapolis," said Dr. Charles L. Venable, the Melvin & Bren Simon Director and CEO at the IMA. "I am thrilled that with the generous help of some special donors, the IMA is able to acquire this key work by one of America's greatest artists. I am confident it will become a beloved addition to the cultural landscape of our state similar to Robert Indiana's original *LOVE*, which has long greeted our visitors," continued Venable.

*Five Brushstrokes* has been acquired through the generosity of the Lichtenstein Foundation and the late Robert and Marjorie Mann of Indianapolis, who established an acquisitions fund for contemporary sculpture through a bequest in 2011. The installation is generously being underwritten by Ersal and Izabela Ozdemir.

"Roy Lichtenstein always wanted his work installed in relationship to other peer artists, so we are all delighted to have worked with the IMA to find such a great home for *Five Brushstrokes* in the museum's gardens," says Dr. Jack Cowart, Director of the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation. He continues, "It has been our pleasure, and with the appreciation of the Lichtenstein family, to facilitate this partial gift to such a remarkable museum setting. We thank the IMA and its Board and supporters for choosing this most adventurous path and for being the first institution to install *Five Brushstrokes*."

To celebrate the installation of *Five Brushstrokes*, the IMA will host an all-day party on August 29, 2014. Activities, programming and promotions will be held on the grounds, including a sculpture dedication ceremony.

#### **About *Five Brushstrokes***

*Five Brushstrokes* was originally commissioned by the Stuart Collection at the University of California San Diego (UCSD) in the early 1980s. Throughout much of 1983 and 1984 Lichtenstein worked on the commission, sketching his thoughts, creating color cut outs of each element, and then making a wooden maquette of the work. However, when the final full-scale specifications were produced, the sculpture's huge scale prevented its fabrication. Following Lichtenstein's death in 1997, the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation was established with the purpose of increasing the world's exposure to the work of Roy Lichtenstein and the Foundation funded the fabrication of two examples of the *Five Brushstrokes* in 2012: the artist proof being acquired by the Indianapolis Museum of Art and an edition of one that is still owned by the Foundation.

The work is monumental and consists of five separate elements, measuring:

Element A:	372 x 36 x 11 in.	(31 feet tall)
Element B:	98 x 357 x 10.25 in.	(29.8 feet wide)
Element C:	104 x 271 x 12in.	(22.6 feet wide)
Element D:	228 x 100 x 11 in.	(19 feet tall)
Element E:	480 x 77 in.	(40 feet tall)

### **About Roy Lichtenstein**

Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923 – 1997) was born in New York City and had his first solo exhibition in the city in 1951. By 1962 Lichtenstein was showing at the prestigious Leo Castelli Gallery, where he exhibited his signature comic strip paintings. He made sculptural works as well in the early 1960s in the form of utilitarian-style objects and mannequin-style heads, both directly influenced by the representation of commercial techniques in his paintings. As his career progressed, the artist's sculpture evolved with his painting. In the 1980s this convergence of media culminated in his monumental *Brushstroke* sculpture series. Evoking the movement and color of paint on canvas, these totem-like works suspend the artist's sweeping brushstrokes in midair, balancing one on top of the other in a dynamic sculptural spectacle. Examples from the *Brushstroke* series are now in the collections of leading museums around the world, including the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia (Madrid), Walker Art Center (Minneapolis), J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles) and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (Washington, DC).

### **About the Indianapolis Museum of Art**

Founded in 1883, the Indianapolis Museum of Art serves the creative interests of its communities by fostering exploration of arts, design and the natural environment. Encompassing 152 acres of gardens and grounds, the IMA is among the 10 oldest and 10 largest encyclopedic art museums in the United States and features significant collections of African, American, Asian, European, contemporary art and design arts that spans 5,000 years of history. Additionally, art, design and nature are featured at The Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres, Oldfields–Lilly House & Gardens, a historic Country Place Era estate and National Historic Landmark on the IMA grounds, and the Miller House and Garden in Columbus, Indiana, one of the country's most highly regarded examples of mid-century Modernist residences. For more information visit [www.imamuseum.org](http://www.imamuseum.org).

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