

**THE MENIL COLLECTION INAUGURATES THE ANNUAL  
MARION BARTHELME LECTURE SERIES, FEBRUARY 11**

**Focusing on artists in the collection, evening honors the memory of Marion Bartheleme**

**Michael Govan, director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art,  
to speak on the work of Michael Heizer**

HOUSTON, TX, January 14, 2013 — Michael Govan, director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, will inaugurate a new annual event at the Menil Collection, the Marion Bartheleme Lectures Series.

Each year the series will explore the work of a key Menil artist. For his subject, Mr. Govan has chosen Michael Heizer, whose works at the museum include four outdoor sculptures and several important studies and other works on paper.

Launching Monday, February 11, at 7 pm, the lecture will be open to the public free of charge.

“Marion was such a vital and generous soul that all of us at the Menil have felt it imperative to keep her memory alive,” said Josef Helfenstein, director of the Menil Collection. “This lecture series – combining the visual arts, the spoken word, and critical inquiry – is very much in keeping with her great spirit.”

The Menil has named this special new series in honor of the late Marion Bartheleme Fort, for many years a central figure in Houston’s cultural community who had served the Menil Collection as Vice President of its Board of Trustees and Chairman of its Nominating and Governance Committee. An author and journalist who joined the editorial staff of Time Magazine while also contributing pieces to the New Yorker magazine’s “Talk of the Town” pages, Bartheleme played an active role in many of her adopted city’s educational and cultural organizations, including the University of Houston, In Print, Houston Seminar, the Alley Theatre, and the literary journal *Gulf Coast*. She also served on the board of the Chinati Foundation in Marfa.

Michael Govan, the first Bartheleme-Lecture speaker, has been the chief executive officer and Wallis Annenberg Director of LACMA since 2006. Prior to his move to the West Coast, he served as director of the Dia Art Foundation, leading the project to create Dia:Beacon. As a curator, he has been closely identified with artists associated with the Menil, including Dan Flavin (whose work was the subject of an acclaimed touring retrospective organized by Mr. Govan) and Michael Heizer (whose 340-ton megalith, *Levitated Mass*, was installed at LACMA in 2012).

Sculptor and land artist Michael Heizer began creating large-scale earthworks in the American West in 1967. His notable works include *Double Negative* (1969-70), a pair of trenches in the desert near Overton, Nevada, created by displacing 240,000 tons of rock, and *City*, an ongoing project in Lincoln County, Nevada, described by critic Michael Kimmelman as “a suite of giant, variously shaped abstract sculptures over an area that covers more than a mile end to end—modern art turned into monumental abstract architecture, with ancient ruins as the model.” Works by Michael Heizer in the Menil Collection include *Dissipate*, *Isolated Mass / Circumflex (#2)*, and *Rift* (all three installed in the museum’s front lawn), *Charmstone* (hanging near the front entrance), and 19 works on paper. Another work in the collection, *Negative Megalith #5*, a massive granite rock floating in a steel frame, is on long-term loan to Dia:Beacon.

### **About The Menil Collection**

Considered one of the most important privately assembled collections of the twentieth century, with holdings that range from the prehistoric to the art of the present day, the Menil Collection opened in 1987 in a modern landmark building designed by the renowned architect Renzo Piano. Surrounding the main building in the Menil’s 30-acre “neighborhood of art” in the heart of Houston’s Museum District are the Cy Twombly Gallery (also by Renzo Piano); Richmond Hall, a commercial building from 1930 now home to fluorescent-light installations by Dan Flavin; rows of Arts-and-Crafts bungalows, and sculpture parks. Over the course of a quarter of a century, the Menil has established an international reputation for presenting acclaimed exhibitions and producing highly respected scholarly publications; pioneering partnerships with other cultural and education institutions across Houston, Texas and the United States; and conducting groundbreaking research into the conservation of modern and contemporary art. The Menil charges no admission fee.

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