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Left: Mercedes Eichholz in 2008 in the exhibition *Merci! Selections from the Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz Collection* with Eduardo MacEntyre's *Construction #3059, an Exterior Plane*, 1969. Plexiglas and acrylic on wood. SBMA, Gift of Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz. **Right:** Pierre Soulages, *May 10*, 1961. Oil on canvas. SBMA, Gift of Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art Celebrates Significant Gifts from the Robert and Mercedes Eichholz Collection

More than 70 noteworthy works enhance SBMA's permanent collection

June 12, 2014—The Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA) is honored to announce the addition of more than 70 works of art to its holdings thanks to a generous bequest from the collection of Robert and Mercedes Eichholz. The extraordinary works range across most continents and virtually all media, and are a significant gesture of support for the continued growth and strength of the Museum's permanent collection.

The late Mercedes Eichholz, or *Merci*, as she was affectionately known to those around her, first became involved with SBMA after the death of her husband Robert in 1983, and remained actively engaged until her death at the age of 96 in August 2013. The Museum exhibited about a third of this recent multi-million dollar gift of art in a 2008 exhibition. Titled *Merci! Selections from the Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz Collection*, the exhibition reflected not only her eclectic tastes, but also her adventurous spirit. One of the works featured in that exhibition is also by one of the most recognized artists in the Eichholz collection: Pablo Picasso. His drawing, *Two Women on a Sofa* (1941) is a part of this generous bequest.



The Eichholz collection includes significant European paintings, such as a sizable 1960 abstraction by contemporary School of Paris artist, Pierre Soulages. Another is by Maria Helena Vieira da Silva. Born in Lisbon, Portugal, Vieira da Silva moved to France where she studied with Fernand Léger, Antoine Bourdelle, and Stanley William Hayter. Her work, like that of Soulages, is affiliated with French Tachisme, a European branch of abstraction that emphasized spontaneity. These paintings comprise a substantial enhancement of the Museum's collection of 20th-century abstraction, which features paintings by Hans Hofmann, Ernst Wilhelm Nay, Kenzo Okada, Serge Poliakoff, Jack Tworkov, and others.

Maria Helena Vieira da Silva, *Cite Lacustre*, 1957. Oil on canvas. SBMA, Gift of Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz.

Another strength of the Eichholz collection is work by Latin American artists from the 1960s and 1970s. The bequest includes exemplary works by Marcelo Bonevardi, Mathias Goeritz, Eduardo MacEntyre, Roberto Matta, and Jesús Rafael Soto. These enhance the Museum's important holdings in this area, which include works by artists Carlos Cruz-Diez, Gyula Kosice, Wilfredo Lam, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and others.

Other works included in the Eichholz bequest are by the artists Agam (Yaacov Agam), Eileen Agar, Enrico Donati, Tschang-Yeul Kim, Jules Olitski, Ann Purcell, and Frank Stella. Reflecting *Merci's* love and support of local artists, the gift also includes works by

Santa Barbara artists Dane Goodman, Mary Heebner, Rafael Perea de la Cabada, Harry Reese, Marie Schoeff, Joan Tanner, and Howard Warshaw.

The Museum will feature a small selection of these works in Colefax Gallery at the end of June 2014.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is a privately funded, not-for-profit institution that presents internationally recognized collections and exhibitions and a broad array of cultural and educational activities as well as travel opportunities around the world.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA.

Open Tuesday - Sunday 11 am to 5 pm, Chase Free Thursday Evenings 5 – 8 pm

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