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## Mark Mothersbaugh named Clyfford Still Museum's first guest curator

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Mark Mothersbaugh

(Photo: CPR / Michael Hughes)

Denver's Clyfford Still Museum has appointed its inaugural guest curator -- Mark Mothersbaugh -- the Denver art institution announced Friday.

The Los Angeles-based visual artist, composer and founding member of the experimental rock band DEVO, plans to select a few paintings by Still and create a musical score to go with them.

Mothersbaugh's exhibition, "Artists Select: Mark Mothersbaugh" will be shown in one of the museum's smaller galleries and is scheduled to open March 6 and run through May 3.

Mothersbaugh has been a strong presence in Denver lately, with the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) **mounting the world's first ever major retrospective of the artist's career**. That show runs through April 12.

Beginning Feb. 17, visitors can buy discounted tickets to visit both Mothersbaugh exhibitions at the MCA and the Still Museum.

The development marks the first significant guest curatorship role for Mothersbaugh, who is used to curating his own work for art shows like the one at the MCA, but has up until now not been called upon to explore the work of another artist for an organization of the size and stature of the Still Museum.

"I have been fascinated with Still's work for a long time," Mothersbaugh said.

In fact, MCA director Adam Lerner, who helped the Still Museum develop its partnership with Mothersbaugh, said he found an interview with DEVO from 1978 in which the band members discuss Still's work. Mothersbaugh and his fellow musicians had seen paintings by the 20th century abstract artist at the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco while playing concerts there.

Clyfford Still Museum deputy director Joan Prusse said the institution has been working on a developing a guest curator series for a long time.

"Clyfford Still, like the other abstract expressionist artists, was in favor of viewers coming to his works their own perspective," Prusse said.

Prusse sees the guest curator initiative, which the museum has branded "Artists Select," as a natural extension of its current "One Painting at a Time" program. This program invites a visiting artist to choose and discuss one of Still's works with visitors.

*"We want to open up a dialogue by having people who are not traditional curators start new conversations."*

*-- Clyfford Still Museum deputy director Joan Prusse*

At the next "One Painting at a Time" event, on Feb. 11, Denver artist Daniel Sprick will discuss Still's "PH-297, 1938."

Prusse considers Mothersbaugh to be an apt choice for the museum's first official guest curator.

"We seized the opportunity because of the breadth of Mark's artistic expression and interests," Prusse said. "Artists are not always interested in engaging with another artist's work."

The museum has not yet lined up guest curators beyond Mothersbaugh. But Prusse mentioned Brazilian visual artist Ernesto Neto and American filmmaker and visual artist Julian Schnabel as two possibilities for the role in the future.