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First U.S. Exhibition Covering Brazilian Paulo Bruscky's Career Comes to Phoenix Art Museum

Includes artworks ranging from mail art to video

PHOENIX (September 3, 2014) — *Paulo Bruscky: Art Is Our Last Hope* will be at Phoenix Art Museum from September 6 to December 28, 2014. Born in Recife, in northeastern Brazil, in 1949, Bruscky is a pioneering mail artist, poet, creator of artist's books, inventor, performance artist, photographer and filmmaker. Since he began making art in the early 1970s, he has focused on creating works that encourage viewers to pay attention to the world around them while also questioning the very nature and purpose of artistic practice. Organized by The Bronx Museum of the Arts, this is the first exhibition in the U.S. to cover Bruscky's career, and features works created between 1971 and 2011 in a range of art forms including mail art, video, sound, Xerox art, altered objects, as well as documentation of performances.

Paulo Bruscky came of age during the dark period of Brazil's military dictatorships (1964-1985). Like many other intellectuals who were deemed "subversive" during this time, he was questioned, threatened, arrested and tortured by the military police. Nevertheless, Bruscky has always operated under the utopian vision that art has the potential to foster social change. He has continuously used humor, irony and caustic wit in a variety of media and on a broad range of topics to challenge the socio-political status quo.

Dr. Vanessa Davidson, Phoenix Art Museum's Shawn and Joe Lampe Curator of Latin American Art, commented, "Bruscky embraced the absurd as a potent antidote to dictatorial oppression." Adding that, "Whether playful or political in tone, his radical works push the boundaries of what art is and what it can be. He is a singular, ingenious artist."

Beginning in the early 1970s, Bruscky sought to create a form of art that could represent the atmosphere in Brazil under military rule. He did this by turning his eyes to the street and to daily reality to question the role of art in society. For Bruscky, art is inseparable from life. Throughout his career, he has aimed to impact audiences outside of the institutional circuit of museums and art galleries, as, for example, in his mail art and billboard art. He has also played a critical role in bringing major international artistic movements to Brazil, including Fluxus, mail art and performance art.

"This is the first in-depth exhibition of works by a Brazilian artist at the Phoenix Art Museum, and we are delighted to share this innovative work with our community," said James K. Ballinger, The Sybil Harrington Director at Phoenix Art Museum. He added that, "Bruscky's works are both challenging and engaging, and will no doubt spark conversations about the diverse kinds of art being produced in Latin America."

Paulo Bruscky: Art Is Our Last Hope was organized by Antonio Sergio Bessa, director of curatorial and education programs at The Bronx Museum of the Arts, and made possible with support from Brazil's Ministry of Culture, the Consulate General of Brazil in New York and Itaú, with the support of Galeria Nara Roesler, the Associação para o Patronato Contemporâneo – APC. The Phoenix Art Museum showing is generously supported by The

Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation. For additional information about the exhibition please visit phxart.org/exhibition/bruscky.

EXHIBITION PROGRAMMING:

In Phoenix *Paulo Bruscky: Art Is Our Last Hope* will be accompanied by public programs including:

- [Focus Latin America: Art Is Our Last Hope](#) – October 1 to November 2
- [International Mail Art Symposium](#) – 6 p.m., October 8
- [Artist Talk: Paulo Bruscky](#) – 7 p.m., October 29

About Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for more than 50 years and is the largest art museum in the southwestern United States. Top national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the museum's collection of over 17,000 objects of American, Asian, European, Latin American, Western American, modern and contemporary art, photography and fashion design. The museum hosts photography exhibitions through its landmark partnership with The University of Arizona's Center for Creative Photography in Tucson. Visitors can also enjoy the PhxArtKids gallery, the Dorrance Sculpture Garden, the Thorne Miniature Rooms of historic interiors, and a collection of works by renowned Arizona artist Philip C. Curtis. For additional information please visit phxart.org or call 602-257-1880.

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