



# NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

## **ALEXIA BECKERLING: HELMVILLE** **July 8 - October 4, 2009**

Artini: Cultural Cocktail, features four of Beckerling's photo-documentary films, September 17, 5:30 - 9 PM

Missoula, MT / July 8, 2009 / Missoula Art Museum (MAM) / Photojournalist Alexia Beckerling spent a great deal of time in recent years in Helmville developing this body of work. Beckerling states, "There are signs of change. But the Helmville community remains faithful to its traditions and has resisted the disintegration of rural life endemic in other Montana counties. Proud Irish matriarchs bake and gossip and look through large ranch windows. Ranchers tend to cattle. The children go to school." On a certain level, Helmville reflects "every small town Montana" known for its anonymity, protective of its relative isolation and proud of its self sufficiency.

MAM is only too pleased to feature this body of work that seems to have captured the essence of a community. Helmville is a small town of approximately 240 people in the Blackfoot Valley in Western Montana. As we see, Beckerling has used photography to capture the realism of place and also it's quintessential beauty. In Beckerling's approach we see the roots of both the community's history and its dogged determination to preserve its own way of life. While Beckerling's project itself is rooted in creative expression it also serves as a form of respectful preservation.

Contact: For more information please contact the Missoula Art Museum at 406-728-0447, visit the MAM website at [www.missoulaartmuseum.org](http://www.missoulaartmuseum.org) or contact Stephen Glueckert, Exhibitions Curator, [stevegl@missoulaartmuseum.org](mailto:stevegl@missoulaartmuseum.org), 406.728.0447 x226.

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**About MAM:** FREE EXPRESSION / FREE ADMISSION. MAM educates, challenges and inspires the community through contemporary art. MAM preserves our emerging cultural heritage through the development and conservation of its art collection. Founded in 1975 and accredited by the American Association of Museums since 1987, MAM showcases diverse and thought-provoking contemporary artwork from local and international artists. Gallery Hours: Wednesday 12-8PM, Thursday-Sunday 12-5PM. Office hours: Mon-Fri, 9AM-5PM.