



NEWS RELEASE

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The New Missoula Art Museum: Opening and Future Art Exhibitions

Missoula, MT / Missoula Art Museum / The new Missoula Art Museum (MAM) opens its doors to the world on September 15. MAM exhibits contemporary art, with a focus on Montana artists and art created in the greater Rocky Mountain West and the Pacific Northwest. Although MAM is already on the map as the source for challenging contemporary art in Western Montana, the expanded facility allows for expanded programming and exhibition opportunities.

The Opening Exhibitions:

The opening exhibition, *MAM Unwrapped*, explores and exposes the reciprocal relationship MAM has with its community; the new museum is a gift to the public and the new museum exists because of gifts received. The inaugural exhibition celebrates the museum supporters who have labored over the past 31 years to make MAM a professional, accredited facility. *MAM Unwrapped* features 200 artworks newly gifted and promised to the Collection and allows the community to learn about the importance and scope of the MAM's Permanent Collection including its Contemporary American Indian Art Collection.

MAM Unwrapped showcases the six state-of-the-art gallery spaces that seamlessly wind their way through naturally lit passages and merge the historic Carnegie and the contemporary addition. Exhibition Curator Steve Glueckert says, "The theme of giving is our idea of a blockbuster with which to open our doors. This is our opportunity to celebrate the many gifts and givers to the collection." The exhibition will include works by artists such as regional favorites like Rudy Autio, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, and Ken Little, and many more artists who are significant to the cultural fabric of the region.

The Ongoing Exhibitions:

MAM produces approximately 25 exhibitions each year, and always includes a Collection exhibit. MAM's exhibit priority is to challenge viewers by presenting diverse media, subject matter, themes and presentations. The planning process also considers the MAM mission statement, how the museum's audiences will be served, and the feasibility of mounting the exhibition given available facilities.

MAM has a long history of partnering with outside community groups. Because the exhibitions are intricately tied to the educational mission partnering with artists from emerging to world-renowned, outside scholars, focus groups of experts, and community institutions is more often the practice than the exception.

A glance at artists and exhibits featured in MAM's 2006-07 schedule:

→ Solo exhibitions:

- **Trimpin**, internationally renowned artist residing in Seattle, will dazzle Missoula with his wizardry in an installation entitled "Sheng High."
- **James Castle**, a prolific, self-taught Idaho artist/bookmaker whose complex and layered artwork has received a great deal of national attention since his death in 1977.
- **Stephanie Bacon** of Idaho will present artwork bridging graphics, typography and installation.

→ Group exhibitions:

- *Silver Lining: Pass Mine Artists' Books* featuring artists' books by Idahoans.
- *Celebrating Explorers* comprises works by North Dakota artists in response to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration.
- *Contemporary Art 35: 35th Annual Benefit Art Auction*, 80 diverse artworks culminating in a live benefit auction February 17 at the new Hilton.
- *Women Beyond Borders* reflects the inspiration of hundreds of women from 37 countries.
- *Persian Visions* consists of 60 works of contemporary photography from Iran.

→ Installation Art Series:

MAM is pleased to announce that it has received funding from the Andy Warhol Foundation to create a six-part series featuring installation art. Beginning in 2007, the project includes exciting public programs and culminates in installations inspired by MAM's new gallery spaces. Regionally and nationally known artists will create new works to challenge and inspire Missoula.

About MAM: FREE EXPRESSION / FREE ADMISSION. Founded in 1975 and accredited by the American Association of Museums in 1987, MAM is a non-profit museum that educates, challenges, and inspires the community through contemporary art. MAM's exhibitions showcase diverse and thought-provoking work from local and international artists.

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