PRESS RELEASE

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Williams College Museum of Art Presents
New Acquisitions/New Perspectives
September 15, 2007—January 6, 2008

Williamstown, MA—The Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) presents New Acquisitions/New Perspectives, an exhibition featuring 21 works that have recently been added to WCMA’s permanent collection. Featuring contemporary work by Laylah Ali, Patty Chang, Liu Zheng, Damien Hirst, Gerhard Richter and Susan Meiselas, among others, this exhibition reflects important movements in both art and art history, positioning the museum’s collection at the forefront of contemporary art and in tune with the latest trends in art scholarship. Also featured is a painting dating from the mid-19th century from India that demonstrates the museum’s continued commitment to enhancing its unusually rich holdings in this area.

"What a museum collects reveals its institutional values more directly than any other activity," says deputy director and exhibition curator John Stomberg. "Acquisitions represent a commitment to future generations of students and education through the arts at Williams."

As a teaching museum, WCMA is committed to supporting departments across the humanities at Williams. This is often reflected in the types of work WCMA collects. The museum has recently acquired 14 prints by the great German photographer August Sander who spent much of his life working on a—sadly unrealized—project to depict all the peoples of his world with a large group (over 500) of representative types: bakers, doctors, farmers, the unemployed etc. The exhibition includes four of these works by Sanders, as well as four of the 120 photographs purchased this year by the Chinese photographer Liu Zheng, representing his entire series, The Chinese. A correlative to Sander’s work, this acquisition is one of the
The museum's most ambitious in recent years and documents the transformation of China's people from every walk of life. The museum expects faculty in Art History, History, Asian Studies, Sociology, and even Economics to draw upon this significant body of images.

The work of emerging talent Lordy Rodriquez was suggested by C. Ondine Chavoya, Assistant Professor of Art. Lordy Rodriquez's beautifully painted watercolor “Territory State,” is part of a series of deeply personalized maps the artist created by conjoining his autobiography and his politics. The result is an enquiry into the nature of national and cultural identity in a rapidly globalizing world society – how does, and how will, identity shift as people from around the globe move, settling and resettling in widely divergent locales? Rodriquez's work suggests a geography mapped by intuition and experience rather than by measurement and observation—a process that will resonate with our increasingly international community as well as the student population at the college.

The Williams College Museum of Art is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Admission is free and the museum is wheelchair accessible. Contact: Suzanne Silitch, Director of Public Relations and External Affairs. 413.597.3178; wcma@williams.edu; www.wcma.org.