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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, presents
“America’s Paradise and ‘Isla Del Encanto’:
Contemporary Art from the American Caribbean”
Work by 11 Artists from the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico

Boston (August 9, 2007) — The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (SMFA), is proud to present **“America’s Paradise’ and ‘Isla Del Encanto’: Contemporary Art from the American Caribbean”** on view in SMFA’S Grossman Gallery from September 18–October 13, 2007. The exhibition explores the perceptions and realities about the American Caribbean through the work of established and emerging regional artists.

“America’s Paradise’ and ‘Isla Del Encanto’: Contemporary Art from the American Caribbean” showcases current work by 11 artists from the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico who are actively engaged in a serious, often angst-filled conversation about the myth of paradise. Ecological concerns, issues of identity, migration, and the complex economic, political, and social relationships with the U.S. are among the timely topics that inform their work.

“With its long-standing commitment to investigation without boundaries, be it artistic or geographic, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, is proud to bring to Boston a selection of contemporary work created by artists from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands,” says Deborah Dluhy, dean of the School and deputy director, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. “The exhibition presents work that is rarely shown in this area and we are pleased to give our visitors the opportunity to learn about and learn from this frequently visited, but rarely understood part of the world.”

The title of the show incorporates the license-plate mottos of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, respectively. While the slogans evoke a sense of fascination with these exotic locales, they also speak to the popular, yet superficial, perceptions about the Caribbean islands. Romanticized notions about these islands of paradise overshadow the residents of the region, along with their cultures and histories. “America’s Paradise’ and ‘Isla Del Encanto’: Contemporary Art from the

American Caribbean” honors the islands’ multiculturalism, creativity, and dynamic history through the work of both traditional and experimental artists. Included in the exhibition are paintings and work on paper by **Monica Marin, Elsa María Meléndez, Shansi Miller, Maud Pierre-Charles, and Rafael Trelles**; sculptures by **Luca Gasperi**; an intervention piece by **LaVaughn Belle**; installations by **Edgar Endress** and **Erik Pedersen**; video documentation of installations by **Mike Walsh**; a video by **Quintín Rivera-Toro**; and a documentary film by **Johanna Bermúdez Ruíz**. For more information about exhibiting artists, please contact Brooke Witkowski at 617-369-3605 or bwitkowski@smfa.edu.

EXHIBITION DATES & LOCATION:

September 18–October 13, 2007
Grossman Gallery
School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
230 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115

GALLERY HOURS:

Monday–Saturday: 10 am–5 pm
Thursday: 10 am–8 pm
Closed Sundays and Holidays

RELATED EVENTS

All related events are free and open to the public.

Opening Reception

Grossman Gallery
Monday, September 17, 5–7 pm

Video Screening Introduced by the Artist

Tuesday, September 25, 12:30 pm, Anderson Auditorium
Screening of the video *Marcha triunfal hacia el Yo/Triumphal March Towards the Self* by Puerto Rican artist **Quintín Rivera-Toro**. The video addresses issues of corporate construction of desires and excess.

Film Screening

Thursday, September 27, 12:30 pm, Anderson Auditorium
Screening of *In Concrete* and *Urban Graphics in Vieques*, two documentaries about Puerto Rican artist **Rafael Trelles** that feature his graphic art projects on walls, sidewalks, and lamp-posts throughout San Juan, Puerto Rico, and the Puerto Rican municipality of Vieques.

Film Screening Introduced by the Artist

Thursday, October 4, 12:30 pm, Anderson Auditorium
Screening of the award-winning documentary *Vieques: Una Isla Forjando Futuros/Vieques: An Island Forging Futures* by Cruzan filmmaker **Johanna Bermúdez Ruíz**. The film highlights the peaceful resistance movement against the U.S. Navy’s bombing practices in Vieques, Puerto Rico.

Artist’s Talk

Thursday, October 11, 12:30 p.m. Grossman Gallery
St. Thomas artist **Erik Pedersen** will discuss his work in the exhibition.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY:

*Available upon request by contacting Brooke Witkowski at 617-369-3605 or
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About the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston:

Founded in 1876 and accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (SMFA), is one of the largest and oldest museum schools in the country. A division of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the School offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs in partnership with Tufts and Northeastern universities. SMFA also offers an all-studio four-year Diploma and one-year Fifth Year and Post-Baccalaureate certificates. Through Continuing Education, evening and weekend courses and art-making programs for adults and teenagers also are available. For more information, please visit www.smfa.edu.