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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Honors Alumnus Omer Fast with 15th Annual Medal Award
Celebration on May 1 aims to raise \$250K for Museum School student scholarships

Boston (May 1, 2010)—The School of the Museum of Fine arts, Boston (SMFA), is pleased to honor alumnus **Omer Fast** at the 15th Annual Medal Award Gala. Since 1996, the Medal Award has been presented to artists who have made a significant and lasting impact on the art world, and recognizes their commitment to diversifying and communicating with the world through art. The gala evening will take place Saturday, May 1 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA).

Omer Fast’s work explores how fact, fiction, memory and history are increasingly obscured and manipulated in today’s world. He blurs the lines of reality, creating stories with snippets of films, video and dialect from personal interviews. These powerful narratives often end without a resolution, leaving viewers to continue to question what they have witnessed long after the final denouement. Holland Cotter of *The New York Times* says Fast is “amazingly good, and getting better.”

Fast was born in 1972 in Jerusalem, Israel and currently lives and works in Berlin. He received a MFA in 2000 from Hunter College and a combined BFA and BA in 1995 from the SMFA and Tufts University. He is the recipient of the prestigious 2008 Bucksbaum Award, presented to a Whitney Biennial participating artist “whose work demonstrates a singular combination of talent and imagination” and the winner of the 2009 Nationalgalerie Prize for Young Art, honoring a Germany-based artist under 40. These awards are among the most highly regarded and valuable awards in the United States and Europe. He regularly exhibits internationally and his work is in museum collections around the world.

The Medal Award is just one way that the School supports the education of artists. The need is critical—73% of our students receive an average of \$14,000 in financial aid each year. Proceeds from the event directly support student scholarships, and make possible the inspired education that drives SMFA students to succeed. Our goal is to raise \$250,000 at this year’s event.

The evening begins with a presentation by Deborah H. Dluhy, dean of the School and deputy director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA) and features Anne Ellegood, senior curator at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, leading Fast in an in-depth conversation and exploration of his work. The pair will be introduced by Jen Mergel, the newly appointed Beal Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the MFA. Following the on-stage events, guests will have the opportunity to engage directly with the artist at a cocktail and buffet reception and to bid on works by select Museum School students in a silent auction.

The Medal Award, endowed through the generosity of Carol and Arnold Haynes, has honored artists Julian Schnabel, Kiki Smith, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, Jeff Koons, and Robert Rauschenberg among others.

To purchase single tickets or table sponsorships, call 617-369-3591 or visit www.smfa.edu/medalaward.

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 only three art schools in the country affiliated with a major museum—the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Our mission is to provide an education in the fine arts that is interdisciplinary and self-directed for motivated artists; our graduates are pioneers who help shape the future of contemporary art. For more information about our programs and partnerships, visit www.smfa.edu.

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