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March 17, 2008

Media Web site: americanart.si.edu/press

2008-2010 Advance Exhibition Schedule

Exhibitions are in galleries at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, located in the heart of Washington’s downtown cultural district at Eighth and F streets N.W., unless otherwise noted. Exhibitions of contemporary craft and decorative arts are at the museum’s branch, the Renwick Gallery, located on Pennsylvania Avenue at 17th Street N.W.; brief descriptions of Renwick exhibitions begin on p. 5. Nationally touring exhibitions are listed on p. 6. Dates and exhibitions are all subject to change and must be confirmed prior to publication.

Note to editors: Selected high-resolution images for publicity only may be downloaded from <ftp://saam-press@ftp.si.edu>. Call (202) 633-8530 for the password. Additional information is available from the museum’s online press room at americanart.si.edu/press.

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New Exhibitions at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Obata's Yosemite

Feb. 22 – June 1

In 1927, Chiura Obata (1885–1975) visited Yosemite National Park and the Sierra Nevada, where he made approximately 100 drawings in pencil, watercolor and sumi ink. Between 1928 and 1930, while Obata was in Tokyo, he transformed these California landscape watercolors and sketches into a limited-edition portfolio titled “World Landscape Series.” The final intricate woodblock prints—some required more than 150 separate working proofs—resemble Obata’s watercolors, with lines like brush strokes and areas of delicately layered color. They are characterized by a distinctive merging of Japanese and Western printmaking styles and techniques. “Obata’s Yosemite” features 27 prints and watercolors and a series of 20 progressive proofs. This display is the first time the artist’s prints have been publicly exhibited on the East Coast. Joann Moser, senior curator for graphic arts, is the curator of the exhibition.

“Obata’s Yosemite” is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The exhibition’s tour is supported in part by the C.F. Foundation, Atlanta and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment Fund.

Color as Field: American Painting, 1950–1975

Feb. 29 – May 26

“Color as Field: American Painting, 1950–1975” is the first full-scale examination of the sources, meaning and impact of the Color Field movement. Color Field painting, which emerged in the United States in the 1950s, is characterized by pouring, staining, spraying or painting thinned paint onto raw canvas to create vast chromatic expanses. These works constitute one of the crowning achievements of postwar American abstract art. The exhibition includes 39 beautiful and impressively scaled paintings by such major figures as Gene Davis, Helen Frankenthaler, Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski. “Color as Field” presents a remarkable opportunity for viewers to fully comprehend the aims of these artists, view their finest works in close relation to each other and experience the beauty and visual magnetism of their pictorial handling of space and color. Karen Wilkin, a specialist in 20th-century modernism who has published widely on this period, is the curator of the exhibition.

Accompanied by a catalog (\$32.95).

“Color as Field: American Painting, 1950–1975” was organized by the American Federation of Arts. This exhibition is made possible, in part, by grants from the Henry Luce Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts as part of American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius. The exhibition’s presentation at the Smithsonian American Art Museum is made possible by the Gene Davis Memorial Fund, Golden Artist Colors, Oriana and Arnold McKinnon, Betty A. and Lloyd G. Schermer, Mike Wilkins and Sheila Duignan, and the Smithsonian Council for American Art.

The Honor of Your Company Is Requested: President Lincoln’s Inaugural Ball

March 8 – Jan. 18, 2010

The Smithsonian American Art Museum organized a small, focused exhibition celebrating Abraham Lincoln’s inaugural ball, which was held March 6, 1865, in what is now the museum’s historic home. The exhibition will relate the ball to the building and its history. The ball took place as Lincoln’s second term began, with the Civil War in its final stages, and only six weeks before Lincoln was assassinated at Ford’s Theater nearby. The exhibition will feature ephemera from the inaugural ball, including the invitation and menu as well as engravings illustrating the night’s events and other artifacts. Charles Robertson, author of the recent book “Temple of Invention: History of a National Landmark” and a specialist in American decorative arts, is the guest curator of the exhibition.

The exhibition is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum with support from the Ford Motor Company Fund.

Upcoming Exhibitions at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Aaron Douglas: African American Modernist

May 9 – Aug. 3

“Aaron Douglas: African American Modernist” presents the first nationally touring retrospective of the work of Aaron Douglas (1899-1979), one of the foremost visual artists from the Harlem Renaissance. This exhibition brings together more than 80 rarely seen works by the artist including paintings, prints, drawings and illustrations, in addition to works by several of his contemporaries. Douglas combined angular cubist rhythms and a seductive Art Deco dynamism with traditional African and African American imagery to develop a radically new visual vocabulary. His forceful ideas and distinctive artistic forms made a lasting impact on American modernism. Susan Earle, curator of European and American art at the Spencer Museum of Art, organized the exhibition.

Accompanied by a catalog (\$45).

Media preview: Tuesday, May 6; 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

“Aaron Douglas: African American Modernist” was organized by the Spencer Museum of Art at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. The exhibition and accompanying catalog are made possible in part with support from the Henry Luce Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. The exhibition’s presentation at the Smithsonian American Art Museum is supported by the Diane and Norman Bernstein Foundation Inc. and PEPCO.

Earth and Sky: Photographs by Barbara Bosworth

June 20 – Nov. 9

Barbara Bosworth (b. 1953) is best known for her photographs of National Champion trees—the largest identified example of each species in the United States. To create these panoramic images and other landscape photographs, Bosworth uses a unique method that combines multiple large format negatives in a single print. The exhibition, which celebrates a recent gift of the artist’s work, will feature more than 40 of Bosworth’s photographs including “The Bitterroot River,” an extended narrative sequence that deals with loss and recovery, and her most recent color photographs of songbirds and the New England landscape surrounding her home near Boston, Mass. While Bosworth’s subjects appear direct and straightforward, her images are notable for their grace and emotional resonance. Toby Jurovics, curator for photography, is the exhibition curator.

Georgia O’Keeffe and Ansel Adams: Natural Affinities

Sept. 26 – Jan. 4, 2009

“Georgia O’Keeffe and Ansel Adams: Natural Affinities” celebrates the deep commitment to the American landscape by these two iconic artists. The exhibition explores how both artists intensely focused their attention on beauty in nature and transformed these elements with color and tone. The exhibition includes approximately 40 paintings from various public and private collections and 50 photographs borrowed primarily from the Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, Ariz., which holds the largest single collection of Adams’ work. Independent scholar Anne Hammond is the curator of the exhibition.

A catalog is forthcoming.

Media preview: Tuesday, Sept. 23; 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

“Georgia O’Keeffe and Ansel Adams: Natural Affinities” was organized by the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum. This exhibition was made possible in part by MetLife Foundation, the exhibition’s Lead National Sponsor, and by The Burnett Foundation and the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum National Council.

Accommodating Nature: The Photographs of Frank Gohlke

Dec. 5 – March 1, 2009

For more than 30 years, Frank Gohlke (b. 1942), a leading figure in American landscape photography, has explored the ways Americans build their lives in a natural world that rarely fits within a traditional

pastoral ideal. This mid-career retrospective, which captures Gohlke's longstanding fascination with nature's proclivities for growth, destruction and unexpected change, features more than 80 photographs—both black-and-white and color prints—spanning the artist's career from the early 1970s through 2004. Rather than celebrating uninhabited landscapes or avoiding evidence of human intrusions, Gohlke's photographs reflect how people interact with an environment that can never fully be controlled. Whether photographing his hometown of Wichita Falls, Texas; the grain elevators that punctuate the vast spaces of the Midwest; the effect of the 1980 volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington state; or the neighborhoods of Queens, N.Y., Gohlke deftly captures the tension between humanity and the natural world, exploring how people adapt to the forces of nature both great and small, even within the confines of their own backyards. The exhibition was organized by John Rohrbach, senior curator of photographs at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. Toby Jurovics, curator of photography at the museum, is the coordinating curator in Washington, D.C. Accompanied by a catalog.

Media preview: Tuesday, Dec. 2; 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

“Accommodating Nature: The Photographs of Frank Gohlke” is organized by the Amon Carter Museum and is made possible in part by generous support from the Perkins-Prothro Foundation, Exelon Power and the Vin and Caren Prothro Foundation.

Graphic Masters: Highlights from the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Feb. 27, 2009 – Aug. 30, 2009

“Graphic Masters: Highlights from the Smithsonian American Art Museum” celebrates the extraordinary variety and accomplishment of American artists' works on paper. These exceptional watercolors, pastels, and drawings from the 1860s through the 1990s reveal the central importance of works on paper for American artists, both as studies for creations in other media and as finished works of art. Artists included in this exhibition range from 19th-century masters such as Winslow Homer, John La Farge and Thomas Moran to modern virtuosos of color such as William H. Johnson and Stuart Davis to contemporary artists Wayne Thiebaud, Jennifer Bartlett and April Gornik.

Accompanied by a catalog.

Media preview: Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2009; 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

What's It All Mean: William T. Wiley in Retrospect

Oct. 2, 2009 – Jan. 24, 2010

William Wiley (b. 1937) has stood the test of time in the face of changing styles, successive movements, critical theories and passing fashion. His self-deprecating humor and sense of the absurd make his art accessible to even those who do not comprehend his more ambiguous ideas, allusions, narratives, private symbols and layers of meaning. Puns are fun, and they make more palatable his deadly serious commentary on war, pollution, global warming, racial tension and other threats to contemporary civilization. “What's It All Mean: William T. Wiley in Retrospect,” the first full-scale look at Wiley's career since 1979, features approximately 100 works from the late 1960s to the present, borrowed from public and private collections as well as from the artist. It will provide a serious overview of Wiley's career while exploring important themes and ideas expressed in his work. Joann Moser, senior curator for graphic arts, is the curator of the exhibition.

A catalog is forthcoming.

Media preview: Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2009; 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Framing the West: The Expedition Photographs of Timothy H. O'Sullivan

Feb. 12, 2010 – May 9, 2010

Timothy H. O'Sullivan (1840–1882), a photographer for two of the most ambitious geological surveys of the 19th century, is likely to have witnessed more of the American interior than any photographer of his generation. O'Sullivan traversed the mountain and desert west for six seasons between 1867 and 1874 as part of government-sponsored expeditions led by Clarence King and Lt. George Wheeler, returning to Washington with hundreds of photographs of newly explored landscapes. These images

reveal a photographer whose reach was far beyond practical documentation, exhibiting a forthright and rigorous style formed in response to the American west. Faced by terrain that was physically challenging, and without previous artistic examples to follow, O'Sullivan created a mature body of work that was without precedent. "Framing the West: The Expedition Photographs of Timothy H. O'Sullivan," the first major look at O'Sullivan photographs in more than 25 years, is a critical re-examination of the artist's work and his continuing influence on American photography. The exhibition and accompanying catalog will present a careful analysis of O'Sullivan's images, the conditions under which they were made, the influences that shaped his work and a study of the lasting historic importance of this remarkable body of photographs. Toby Jurovics, curator for photography, is the exhibition curator. This exhibition will travel in 2010.

A catalog is forthcoming.

Media preview: Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010; 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Current Exhibitions at the Renwick Gallery

Ornament as Art: Avant-Garde Jewelry from the Helen Williams Drutt Collection

March 14 – July 6

"Ornament as Art: Avant-Garde Jewelry from the Helen Williams Drutt Collection" is a landmark exhibition that explores contemporary jewelry from a global perspective. The exhibition traces the development of artist-made jewelry and honors its craft roots while also placing the work within a larger framework of seminal movements in 20th century art. "Ornament as Art" showcases a broad array of national and international works made between 1963 and 2006. It features 300 objects, including 275 pieces of jewelry and drawings, watercolors, sketchbooks and sculptural constructions by the artists. The exhibition is drawn from the Helen Williams Drutt collection, considered by many to be one of the most significant contemporary jewelry collections in the United States. The collection was assembled during a 40-year period in which the history and developments in the field were observed and documented by Drutt. More than 115 artists from 21 different countries are represented in the exhibition with the largest concentration working in the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Britain and Italy. Cindi Strauss, curator of modern and contemporary decorative arts and design at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, organized the exhibition; Robyn Kennedy is the coordinating curator in Washington.

Accompanied by a catalog (\$90).

"Ornament as Art: Avant-Garde Jewelry from the Helen Williams Drutt Collection" has been organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Generous funding has been provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rotasa Foundation. The James Renwick Alliance supports the exhibition's presentation at the Renwick Gallery.

Upcoming Exhibitions at the Renwick Gallery

Lino Tagliapietra in Retrospect: A Modern Renaissance in Glass

Oct. 3 – Jan. 11, 2009

"Lino Tagliapietra in Retrospect: A Modern Renaissance in Glass" is the first exhibition to thoroughly examine the art of Lino Tagliapietra (b. 1934), widely revered as a master of glass blowing, and to document his unparalleled contributions to fostering a new generation of glass artists. Trained in the traditional Venetian glass blowing techniques, Tagliapietra traveled between the glass centers of Venice, Italy and the Pacific Northwest. In 1979, he was invited by Dale Chihuly to teach at the recently established Pilchuck Glass School in Seattle, Wash. He is widely credited with changing the course of contemporary studio glass through his teaching. The exhibition will feature more than 160 works from Tagliapietra's 40-year career, including pivotal works from the artist's own collection and collections around the world, as well as designs made for industry and objects that have never been

exhibited. The exhibition curator is Susanne Frantz, former curator of 20th-century glass at the Corning Museum of Glass in Corning, N.Y. Jane Milosch is the coordinating curator in Washington.

Accompanied by a catalog.

Media preview: Tuesday, Sept. 30; 3 – 5 p.m.

“Lino Tagliapietra in Retrospect: A Modern Renaissance in Glass” is organized by the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, Wash.

Renwick Craft Invitational 2009 [w/t]

July 31, 2009 – Jan. 10, 2010

The 2009 Renwick Craft Invitational is the fourth in a biennial exhibition series, established in 2000, which honors the creativity and talent of craft artists working today. Artists featured in the exhibition will be selected by Renwick Gallery curator Jane Milosch; Kate Bonansinga, director of the Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts at the University of Texas at El Paso; and Paul J. Smith, director emeritus of the American Craft Museum.

A catalog is forthcoming.

The Ryna and Melvin Cohen Family Foundation generously supports the “Renwick Craft Invitational.”

Continuing Exhibitions at the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Celebrating the Lucelia Artist Award, 2001–2006

On view through June 22

The Lucelia Artist Award, established in 2001, has been an important new initiative at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The award annually recognizes an exceptional American artist younger than 50. The recipient is selected by a distinguished panel of jurors who nominate artists whose work they consider emblematic of this period in contemporary art. Each of the previous winners—Matthew Coolidge, director of the Center for Land Use Interpretation (2006); Andrea Zittel (2005); Kara Walker (2004); Rirkrit Tiravanija (2003); Liz Larner (2002); and Jorge Pardo (2001)—is represented in the exhibition. Sidra Stich, former executive director of the Lucelia Artist Award and director of “art-SITES,” a series of contemporary art, architecture and design handbooks, is the guest curator of the exhibition.

Nationally Touring Exhibitions Organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum

Over the Top: American Posters from World War I

“Over the Top: American Posters from World War I” features 59 war bond posters, focusing on the four Liberty Loan campaigns, the War Savings Stamp program, the Victory Loan and support for the Red Cross. These persuasive images, with bold graphics and concise commands, encouraged citizens to support the troops, contribute to the Red Cross and buy bonds to finance America’s participation in the war. The posters, selected from the collection of Thomas and Edward Pulling, are a fascinating window into the American experience in the early 20th century.

Smithsonian American Art Museum (Oct. 26, 2007 – Feb. 3, 2008)

Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, Mass. (Nov. 8, 2008 – Jan. 25, 2009)

“Over the Top: American Posters from World War I” is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The exhibition’s tour is supported in part by the C.F. Foundation, Atlanta and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment Fund.

The Prints of Sean Scully

Sean Scully (b. 1945) has been making prints for more than 30 years and considers these works to be as significant as his paintings. “The Prints of Sean Scully” presents a selection of 44 works from a master set of prints that was acquired in 2001 and is updated annually with newly created works. Scully chose

the Smithsonian American Art Museum as the only museum in the United States to receive a master set. Using his instantly-recognizable block shapes, Scully's richly layered prints explore recurring themes in his work, such as the play of light and shadow, the expressive qualities of color and the spatial relationships created by the edges of his distinctive abstract forms.

Smithsonian American Art Museum (May 18, 2007 – Oct. 8, 2007)

Naples Museum of Art in Naples, Fla. (Nov. 10, 2007 – Jan. 13, 2008)

Minneapolis Institute of Art in Minneapolis, Minn. (March 1, 2008 – May 4, 2008)

Hyde Collection in Glens Falls, N.Y. (Sept. 5, 2008 – Nov. 2, 2008)

"The Prints of Sean Scully" is organized and circulated by the Smithsonian American Art Museum with support from Gisele Galante Broida, Don Brown, Ruth Holmberg and Norfolk Southern Corporation. The exhibition's tour is supported in part by the C.F. Foundation, Atlanta and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment Fund.

Earl Cunningham's America

"Earl Cunningham's America" examines the paintings of Earl Cunningham (1893–1977), one of the foremost folk artists of the 20th century. This retrospective presents the artist as a folk modernist who used flat space and brilliant color to create sophisticated compositions with complex meanings about the nature of American life. The exhibition and the fully-illustrated catalog trace the story of Cunningham's life and place his work in the context of the folk art revival that brought Edward Hicks, Grandma Moses, Horace Pippin and other folk masters to national attention.

Smithsonian American Art Museum (Aug. 10, 2007 – Nov. 4, 2007)

American Folk Art Museum in New York City (March 4, 2008 – Aug. 31, 2008)

Fenimore Art Museum in Cooperstown, N.Y. (Sept. 26, 2008 – Dec. 31, 2008)

The Mennello Museum of American Art in Orlando, Fla. (March 6, 2009 – Aug. 2, 2009)

Earl Cunningham's America is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The exhibition is made possible by generous support from Darden Restaurants Foundation; the Elizabeth Morse Genius Foundation; the Arts and Cultural Affairs Office of Orange County, Fla.; CNL Financial Group; Bright House Networks; Lockheed Martin; and Friends of The Mennello Museum of American Art. The exhibition's tour is supported in part by the C. F. Foundation, Atlanta.

Passing Time: The Art of William Christenberry

William Christenberry (b. 1936) looks for the spirit of Southern culture in the landscape and architecture of rural Alabama. Drawing upon his formal training, family traditions and a lasting relationship with his native home in Hale County, Christenberry has spent the last 50 years creating a remarkable body of work that is an exploration of all aspects of life and experience. This exhibition—not a retrospective but a survey of past and present work—includes 53 photographs, drawings, paintings, sculptures and building constructions. Though his work is inspired by the American South, Christenberry's overall themes are universal, touching on family, culture, nature and the spiritual. His artworks are poetic assessments of a sense of place, landscape, aging, memory and the passing of time.

Smithsonian American Art Museum (July 1, 2006 – July 8, 2007)

Telfair Museum of Art in Savannah, Ga. (May 14, 2008 – Sept. 28, 2008)

Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art in Nashville (March 14, 2009 – June 14, 2009)

"Passing Time: The Art of William Christenberry" is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The exhibition's tour is supported in part by the C. F. Foundation, Atlanta and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment Fund.

Elihu Vedder's Drawings for the "Rubáiyát" of Omar Khayyám

Since the first English translation in 1859, hundreds of editions of the "Rubáiyát," written around 1120 by the Persian mathematician, astronomer and poet Omar Khayyám, have been published. The poem expounds on the transience of existence and the uselessness of science or religion to untangle the knotted meaning of life. Elihu Vedder (1836–1923), an ardent admirer of the verses, arranged the most famous and elaborate edition in the 1880s. Vedder created the designs for the entire book – its cover,

lining paper, compelling drawings and eccentric hand-drawn letters – which set the standard for an artist-designed book in America and England at the time. This exhibition features 55 drawings from the museum’s collection.

Brandywine River Museum in Chadds Ford, Penn. (March 15, 2008 – May 18, 2008)

Phoenix Art Museum (Nov. 14, 2008 – Feb. 10, 2009)

“Elihu Vedder’s Drawings for the ‘Rubáiyát’ of Omar Khayyám” is organized and circulated by the Smithsonian American Art Museum. The exhibition’s tour is supported in part by the C.F. Foundation, Atlanta and the William R. Kenan Jr. Endowment Fund.

About the Smithsonian American Art Museum and its Renwick Gallery

The Smithsonian American Art Museum celebrates the vision and creativity of Americans with approximately 41,000 artworks in all media spanning more than three centuries. Its National Historic Landmark building, a dazzling showcase for American art and portraiture, is located at Eighth and F streets N.W. in the heart of a revitalized downtown arts district. Museum hours are 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Metrorail station: Gallery Place/Chinatown (Red, Yellow and Green lines). Smithsonian Information: (202) 633-1000; (202) 633-5285 (TTY). Recorded museum information: (202) 633-7970. Web site: americanart.si.edu.

The Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian American Art Museum is dedicated to exhibiting contemporary American crafts and decorative arts from the 19th to the 21st centuries. The Renwick is located on Pennsylvania Avenue at 17th Street N.W., near the Farragut North (Red line) and Farragut West (Blue and Orange lines) Metrorail stations. The Renwick Gallery is open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily, except Dec. 25. Admission is free. Web site: americanart.si.edu.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum’s traveling exhibition program has circulated hundreds of exhibitions since it was established in 1951. From 2000 to 2005, the museum organized 14 exhibitions of more than 1,000 major artworks from its permanent collection that traveled to 105 venues across the United States. More than 2.5 million visitors saw these exhibitions.

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