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Note to writers: Digital images of several works from upcoming are available for reproduction. If interested, please contact Margaret Keough at 816-457-6132 or Becca Ramspott at 816-457-6140.

NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW AND EXCITING EXHIBITIONS TO KEMPER MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART

2006 features artists who explore wide range of media, ideas

KANSAS CITY, MO—If your New Year’s resolution includes infusing your life with more culture, look no further than the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. The year 2006 brings a variety of exhibitions featuring artists whose works explore challenging and inspiring ideas and reflect innovative applications of different media. Admission to the Kemper Museum and its exhibitions is free.

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

- *Decelerate* (December 16, 2005–February 19, 2006)

Decelerate explores the cultural trend of “slowing down” and returning to a somewhat simpler or more attuned state. Expressed in our culture by the growing popularity of the international “slow movement” and other activities and movements (slow cooking, urban revitalization, yoga, knitting, meditation, etc.), this anti-velocity attitude also has an equivalent in the visual arts. *Decelerate* includes works that are labor and/or time intensive (sometimes handcrafted, sometimes not); that recycle and transform prosaic materials into objects of beauty or wonder; that liberate our assumptions about the materials and processes of making art; and, most importantly, that inspire us to slow down, contemplate, and discover the intangible rewards that art—and life—have to offer. From the very simple to the extremely complex, works by ten artists— Colby Caldwell, Augusto



Kurt Lightner, *Untitled*, 2004; acrylic ink on Mylar collage, 50 3/4 x 72 inches; Private collection

(more)

Di Stefano, Jacob El Hanani, Tony Feher, Anne Lindberg, Rei Naito, Sheila Pepe, Michelle Segre, Jennifer Steinkamp, and Yoshihiro Suda—make up the exhibition.

- *foldoverfold: Marcie Miller Gross (December 16, 2005–January 29, 2006)*

Kansas City artist Marcie Miller Gross explores the poetic possibilities of utilitarian objects in her often massive or towering textile sculptures. In the past, she used beach towels, clothing, and hospital surgical towels as her primary materials, each embodying a particular personal history, as evidenced by their soft edges and visible discolorations from use, as well as a significant relationship to the human body. For her exhibition at the Kemper Museum, she uses nearly 6,000 new cotton huck towels to create an environment that simultaneously explores spatial dynamics and the hidden histories of labor. Gross is a visiting artist at the Kemper Museum, and this is her first solo museum exhibition.

- *Kurt Lightner: Five Acres (February 3–April 2, 2006)*

Using hundreds of cutout pieces of hand-painted Mylar, Kurt Lightner creates richly layered and magnificently detailed collages that depict real and imaginary landscapes. The nature that Lightner portrays is lush and vibrant, but it is also sometimes slightly menacing. While very much grounded in the 21st century, Lightner's nature images recall the varied history of American nature painting—from the awe-inspiring paintings by the Hudson River School artists to the eerie watercolors of early American Modernist painter Charles Burchfield. Lightner is a visiting artist at the Kemper Museum.

- *Ping-Pong Diplomacy: Stephen Hendee & Phoebe Washburn (March 11–May 14, 2006)*

In this exhibition, two artists share the same gallery space to create installations. Las Vegas-based **Stephen Hendee** and New York-based **Phoebe Washburn** both use pedestrian materials to construct immense and uncanny site-specific environments that invite viewer participation; however, their respective constructions seemingly appear to belong to vastly different worlds. Hendee's forms merge the ethereal realm of cyberspace with the organic, while Washburn's works composed of post-consumerist detritus are firmly rooted in terrestrial existence. Light and air are juxtaposed with weight and matter. While the artists share related ideas about shaping and constructing space and abide by similar parameters, their strategies for implementing their ideas diverge widely—they follow the same rules yet possess different styles. Taking a historic 1971 table tennis tournament as its point of reference, this exhibition features two major site-specific installations by Hendee and Washburn that commingle in one large (neutral and centrally-located) space and respond to one another, play by play. Significantly, at the juncture of the two installations is a ping-pong arena replete with a fully functional game table and bleachers (to be used by museum visitors) that was designed by the artists in tandem, and reflects their respective aesthetics. It is here that the artists (and visitors) face off but also come together in a playful metaphor for the civilized strategic realization of conflict. Hendee and Washburn are visiting artists at the Kemper Museum.

- *Ryan Humphrey: Empty Thoughts, Lame Excuses, and Decorative Lies* (April 7–July 2, 2006)

Coupling a nostalgia for pop culture and an irreverence for the history of art, New York-based sculptor and installation artist Ryan Humphrey makes bold and energetic multi-sensory works that are simultaneously humorous and conceptually loaded. For his show at the Kemper Museum, his first solo museum exhibition, Humphrey has created several new works that blend the flamboyant styles of car culture and sounds of popular music with the aesthetic concerns of high modernism. Eddie Van Halen and Public Enemy meet Rothko and Rodchenko in “customized” works made or derived from a 1970s BMW 7-series hood, the side of a 1971 Chevy C-10 van, and a 1964 Lincoln Continental convertible, among others. Humphrey is a visiting artist at the Kemper Museum.

- *Capturing Nureyev: James Wyeth Paints the Dancer* (June 2–August 20, 2006)

Upon meeting the Russian dancer Rudolf Nureyev in 1977, American artist Jamie Wyeth was captivated by the beauty and intricacy of the art of dance, as well as Nureyev’s charismatic personality and exceptional talent. The two artists developed a close friendship, and a fruitful collaboration resulted, inspiring Wyeth to produce more than 35 paintings and drawings of Nureyev. *Capturing Nureyev* is organized by the Farnsworth Art Museum and Wyeth Center, Rockland, Maine.

- *Zephyr: The Paintings by Gajin Fujita* (September 9 – November 5, 2006)

Zephyr is the first major solo museum exhibition of the provocative and visually stunning work of the acclaimed young Los Angeles artist Gajin Fujita. His work includes elaborate fusions of contemporary urban street life and traditional Japanese iconography. The past and present, high art and pop culture, and Eastern and Western aesthetics exist in harmony in Fujita’s paintings, demonstrating the artist’s masterful ability to create visual metaphors for today’s global society. Organized by Kemper Museum curator Elizabeth Dunbar, the exhibition will survey nearly a decade of Fujita’s dazzling paintings. A full color, scholarly catalogue will also be produced in conjunction with the exhibition. He is a visiting artist at the Kemper Museum.

About the Kemper Museum

Kansas City’s acclaimed, free contemporary art museum, the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art opened in 1994 and draws more than 130,000 visitors each year. The Museum boasts a rapidly growing permanent collection of modern and contemporary works of artists from around the world. The Museum hosts temporary exhibitions, installations, performance work, film and video series, lectures, concerts, children’s workshops, and other creative programs designed to both entertain and challenge.

The Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art is open 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Tuesday–Thursday; 10:00 a.m.–9:00 p.m., Friday–Saturday; and 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Sunday. The galleries at Kemper East (200 E. 44th Street) are open 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., Tuesday–Thursday. The Museum’s popular Café Sebastienne serves lunch 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Tuesday–Saturday; dinner 5:30–9:30 p.m., Friday–Saturday; and brunch 11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Sunday. The Museum and Café are closed on Mondays. **Museum admission and parking are free.**

