

For Immediate Release
February 2007

Press Contact: Jennifer Gaby, (314) 535-4660 x 215 or jennifer.gaby@contemporarystl.org

**CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM ST. LOUIS AND THE GATEWAY FOUNDATION
ANNOUNCE INCREASED FUNDING, AND SELECTED JURORS,
AND CALL TO ARTISTS FOR THE *GREAT RIVERS BIENNIAL 2008***

Top area artists benefit from innovative program

[FEBRUARY 2007-- St. Louis, MO] Paul Ha, Director of the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, has announced the *Great Rivers Biennial Award Program* will increase its prize award from \$15,000 to \$20,000 in 2008. The innovative program awards three area artists with **\$20,000 each** and an **exhibition at the Contemporary**.

THE PROGRAM

The *Great Rivers Biennial* is a collaboration between the Contemporary and the Gateway Foundation designed to strengthen the local art scene in St. Louis. This innovative program identifies talented emerging local artists, and provides them with financial support, as well as local and national visibility.

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis and the Gateway Foundation are committed to energizing the spirit of the art scene in St. Louis and feel the *Great Rivers Biennial Awards Program* does just that by providing emerging artists with a tremendous platform to the national art world. As many as three artists will be selected by a panel of nationally recognized jurors to receive a grant of newly increased amount of \$20,000 from the previous \$15,000 each and the invaluable opportunity to exhibit at the Contemporary. With the exhibition space provided by the Contemporary, the *Great Rivers* program hopes to raise the visibility of the artists' work by providing them with professional support from visiting critics, curators, and dealers, as well as connecting the artists to the St. Louis public. The program is generously funded by the Gateway Foundation.

"We are excited to not only continue offering the *Great Rivers* award, but also to present an increased award, allowing artists to expand their projects and work on a larger-scale," Director Paul Ha noted, "We hope the larger gift and the commitment of prominent national jurors for 2008 will continue to establish a solid platform for St. Louis based artists to gain exposure in the

national arts scene." The financial and professional assistance make the fellowship extremely rewarding for local artists. This will be the third round of awards since the inaugural Great Rivers Biennial in 2004. The past winners include **Jill Downen, Adam Frelin, Kim Humphries, Moses, Matthew Strauss,** and **Jason Wallace Triefenbach.** The distinguished jurors for the past Great Rivers Biennial include **Lisa Corrin,** Director, Williams College Museum of Art, **Elizabeth Dunbar,** Curator at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City; **Gary Garrels,** Chief Curator and Deputy Director of Exhibitions and Public Programs at the UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; and **Helen Molesworth,** Curator of Contemporary Art at the Harvard University Art Museums, **Debra Singer,** Executive Director and Chief Curator, The Kitchen, and **Hamza Walker,** Education Director, Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago.

THE 2008 JURORS

The distinguished jurors for the *Great Rivers Biennial 2008* are: **Cheryl Brutvan,** Curator of Contemporary Art, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; **Lilian Tone,** Assistant Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and **Heidi Zuckerman Jacobson,** Director and Chief Curator, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, Colorado.

THE CALL TO ARTISTS

Artists in all stages of career development, especially mid-career and emerging artists, residing in the St. Louis area, are invited to submit work from any of the followings categories: drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, mixed media, and multi-media. An emerging artist is someone in the early stages of his or her career development who has not yet received wide exhibition exposure locally or nationally or significant financial awards from other organizations. A mid-career artist will be considered if their work is evolving, stretching, or advancing in new directions. To be eligible for participation in the program, artists must reside in the metro area, including St. Louis City and the counties of St. Louis, Jefferson and St. Charles in Missouri or St Clair, Madison, and Monroe counties in Illinois, for at least one year prior to the **application deadline of June 1, 2007.** Undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to apply. Artists in all stages of their career are encouraged to apply.

Jurors will review all submissions that meet the eligibility requirements and will select up to three emerging artists meeting the Biennial's criteria. The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis will mount a group exhibition of the work by the selected award winners in January 2008 and will also produce accompanying gallery guide materials for the artists' works.

For more information about the *Great Rivers Biennial 2008 Awards Program* and how to submit work, please visit, www.contemporarystl.org; call 314-535-4660 and/or e-mail greatrivers@contemporarystl.org. For more information about Gateway Foundation, please go to www.gateway-foundation.org.

THE CONTEMPORARY

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis has created its own distinctive approach to collaborative partnerships and educational programs, integrating the mission of the institution within the needs of the surrounding community. In developing its outreach and educational programs, the Contemporary aims to provide opportunities unavailable at any other regional arts organization. The museum has earned national acclaim for its innovative programs including New Art in the Neighborhood for at-risk and talented urban youth; Peer-to-Peer Docent Training for high school juniors; and The Emerson Visiting Critics and Curators Series which provides free community lectures and art studio visits by select arts leaders.

###