



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BMA PRESENTS SONDHEIM PRIZE FINALISTS

BALTIMORE, MD (June 20, 2007) — In conjunction with Artscape, Baltimore's premier arts festival, the BMA presents **The Janet & Walter Sondheim Prize Finalists: Artscape at the BMA** juried exhibition from **June 23 to August 5, 2007**. Selected from more than 320 applications, the seven finalists for this year's \$25,000 prize are: Richard Cleaver, Frank Hallam Day, Eric Dyer, Geoff Grace, Baby Martinez, Tony Shore, and Karen Yasinsky. They were chosen by an independent panel of jurors: Derrick Adams, New York-based artist; Becky Smith, Owner & Director of Bellwether Gallery in New York; and Robert Storr, Commissioner of the 2007 Venice Biennale, Curator and Dean of the Yale University School of Art. The BMA's exhibition is curated by Jay Fisher, BMA Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Senior Curator for Prints, Drawings & Photographs. The winner of the coveted award will be announced at a special ceremony and reception held at the BMA on Friday, July 13. Another exhibition of semifinalists will take place at the Maryland Institute College of Art's Decker and Meyerhoff Galleries opening during Artscape weekend on July 20 and continuing through August 2.

JANET & WALTER SONDHEIM ARTSCAPE PRIZE FINALISTS

Richard Cleaver is a sculptor and long-time resident of Baltimore. He has exhibited his highly detailed hand built ceramic and wood sculptures, embellished with items such as fresh water pearls, garnets, Swarovski crystals and gold leaf, at venues throughout the country including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, The Baltimore Museum of Art, International Sculpture Center, and Bernice Steinbaum Gallery. The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Delaware Art Museum, Erie Art Museum, and Museum of Ceramic Art in New York all boast Cleaver's work in their permanent collections. Cleaver has also been awarded several Maryland State Arts Council Grants, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and he won the Trawick Prize in 2003. He is a graduate of the Maryland Institute College of Art.

Frank Hallam Day, a photographer who lives and works in Washington, D.C., travels the globe capturing changing urban landscapes and societies. His work has been shown globally in venues such as Civilian Art Projects and the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., Otto Nagel Galerie in Berlin, the American Embassy in Athens, and Mois de la Photo in Dakar. He is featured in the permanent collections of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, The Baltimore Museum of Art, Freer + Sackler Galleries of the Smithsonian Institution, San Diego Museum of Photographic Arts, and Berlinische Galerie und Landesmuseum Berlin. Day has taught photography at the Washington Center for Photography and at the Smithsonian. He has been the recipient of several awards and was recently reviewed in *ARTnews*, *Washington Post*, and *Washington City Paper*.

Eric Dyer, a Baltimore native, has been working as a film animator and director for over 13 years. His animated shorts and videos have been featured on MTV, MTV Europe, and BET networks, and at the Rome International Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, and Black Maria Film & Video Festival, where he won Director's Choice Awards in 2005 and 2007. Dyer's animated films are primarily based on intricately detailed, flying-saucer-shaped zoetrope sculptures he creates from numerous cut-out printed stills from video footage taken on location. Dyer received his Masters of Fine Arts from the Mount Royal School of Art at the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2004, and a Fulbright Fellowship to study in Denmark the following year. He teaches Visual Arts and Animation at the University of Maryland Baltimore County—his other alma mater. He was also a finalist for the Sondheim Prize in 2006.

Geoff Grace, an active member of the Baltimore art and music scene, has exhibited extensively in the area and performs regularly with his band *The Tall Grass*. His art has been shown in Baltimore at Gallery Four, Maryland Art Place, 5th Story, School 33 Art Center, Rosenberg Gallery, Contemporary Museum, The Baltimore Museum of Art, and Area 405, and he has had public art pieces in the Station North Arts & Entertainment District and at Lexington and Howard Streets. Grace received his Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Arts in Teaching from the Maryland Institute College of Art. He currently teaches art and photography at Overlea High School in Baltimore County.

—more—

Baby Martinez, a 2001 graduate of the Corcoran College of Art and Design, has been living and working in Washington D.C. for the past several years. Martinez's work addresses the uplifting side of social interaction—for example, one work documents his project that placed \$20 bills into random pants at a thrift store, giving the purchaser of said pants a surprise gift. He has exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., Artspace in Miami, and Artscape and School 33 in Baltimore. He also curated *Exchange*, an exhibition of work from artists in the Baltimore and Richmond areas. Martinez has recently completed residencies at Virginia Commonwealth University and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. He was also a finalist for the 2006 Sondheim Prize.

Tony Shore, a native Baltimorean and graduate of the Baltimore School for the Arts and the Maryland Institute College of Art, creates large paintings on dark velvet. He is represented by C. Grimaldis Gallery in Baltimore where he has had several solo exhibitions. He has exhibited at various spaces including the Gomez Gallery in Baltimore, David Beitzel Gallery in New York, Delaware Art Museum, and Contemporary Arts Collective Gallery in Las Vegas. He received the Bethesda Painting Prize in 2006 as well as several Maryland State Arts Council Grants. Shore completed a residency at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 1996, and received his Masters of Fine Arts from Yale University in 1997. He is currently on the faculty of the Foundations Department at the Maryland Institute College of Art and founding Director of Access Art, a youth art center in Baltimore's Morrell Park neighborhood.

Karen Yasinsky, an artist living and working in Baltimore, primarily works in the mediums of animated video, installation, and drawing. She has exhibited internationally in venues such as the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center and MoMA Film at the Grammercy Theater in New York, and the International Film Festival in Rotterdam, and her work has been reviewed by the *New York Times*, *zing magazine*, *Artforum*, *Village Voice*, and *Art in America*. The recipient of a 2002 Guggenheim Foundation Grant, Yaskinsky teaches at The Johns Hopkins University in Film/Media Studies and she is a founding board member of the Gunk Foundation, a private foundation for public art. She is represented by Sprueth Magers Projekte in Munich and Mireille Mosler, Ltd. in New York, and has upcoming shows at the Wexner Center in Ohio and at Mireille Mosler, Ltd.

Janet & Walter Sondheim Prize

The Artscape prize is named in honor of Janet and Walter Sondheim, who were instrumental in creating the Baltimore City that exists today. Walter Sondheim, Jr. was one of Baltimore's most important civic leaders for over 50 years. His accomplishments included oversight of the desegregation of the Baltimore City Public Schools in 1954 when he was president of the Board of School Commissioners. Later, he was deeply involved in the development of Charles Center and the Inner Harbor. He continued to be active in civic and educational activities in the city and state, and served as the senior advisor to the Greater Baltimore Committee until his death in February 2007.

Janet Sondheim danced with the pioneering Denishawn Dancers, a legendary dance troupe founded by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn. Later, she turned to teaching where she spent 15 years at the Children's Guild working with severely emotionally disturbed children. After retirement, she was a volunteer tutor at Highlandtown Elementary School. She married Walter in 1934, and they were together until her death in 1992.

Artscape returns July 20-22 with more than 150 artists, craftspeople, and fashion designers from across the country; visual art exhibits both on and off site; live concerts on four outdoor stages; performing arts including dance, opera, theater, fashion, film, and classical music, hands-on projects, and children's entertainers; three street theater locations; and a delicious international menu of food and beverages. Artscape is presented by Mayor Sheila Dixon and produced by the Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts.

For more information on the **Janet & Walter Sondheim Prize**, visit www.artscape.org or call 410-752-8632.

The Sondheim Prize is possible in part by grants from the France-Merrick Foundation, the Rouse Company Foundation, and Amy Newhall.

For media inquiries only:	Anne Mannix or Kelly Linton, BMA, 443-573-1870 Tracy Baskerville or Jennifer Ogunsola, BOPA, 410-752-8632
---------------------------	--