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For Immediate Release

FOTOFEST 2006

The Eleventh International Biennial of Photography and Photo-related Art

1986-2006

The Earth – Artists Responding to Violence

March 10 - April 23, 2006

Houston, Texas

HOUSTON, TEXAS (February 14, 2006) – FotoFest International announces the *Eleventh International Biennial of Photography and Photo-related Art*, FOTOFEST2006 in Houston, Texas. FOTOFEST2006 is concurrently the twentieth anniversary of the biennial. The city-wide event will feature over 120 exhibitions of photographic art works in museums and non-traditional gallery spaces throughout Houston. FotoFest's acclaimed Portfolio Review program, The International Meeting Place, and the Fine Print Auction are scheduled for the opening weeks of the 2006 Biennial.

FOTOFEST EXHIBITIONS AND INSTALLATIONS March 10 – April 23, 2006

FotoFest is curating and commissioning 20 exhibitions featuring 40 artists around dual themes: *The Earth* and *Artists Responding to Violence*. More than 100 other spaces, from full-time galleries and museums to commercial and retail places, are participating with independently curated exhibitions.

The Earth continues and expands the FotoFest 2004 exploration of Water, combining conceptual and figurative interpretations of earth through artistic expression, science, and public policy. The capacity of human society to inflict violence upon itself and the earth is expanding with the ever increasing spread of technology and population. The physical and mythic force of earth presents itself in art in many guises. FOTOFEST2006 is presenting work that engages *The Earth* metaphorically and figuratively. The art encompasses mixed-media work, classical photography, video and film. It addresses both human and non-human life in broad existential ways as well as issues of land use and geophysical history.

Artists Responding to Violence is a separate but connected theme to *The Earth*. Human-created violence, from war to the household, is omni-present and ubiquitous. It is not only threatening the existence of earth but is transforming the nature of political society. In exploring this theme, FotoFest is not focusing on the depiction of violent acts but rather on how artists interpret these acts of violence, the human capacity for violence, and the presence of violence in many aspects of life.

FotoFest is using a wide variety of media to explore these themes including traditional silver-based photography, digital processes, mixed-media installations, as well as film and video. FotoFest's own exhibitions are located in the FotoFest headquarters at Vine Street Studios warehouse, DiverseWorks Artspace, The Art League, Winter Street Studios, The New World Museum, as well as galleries, corporate, and alternative spaces throughout Houston. Selected FOTOFEST2006 exhibitions include

new installations by Alfredo Jaar, and The Starn Twins, as well as new work by Liza Nguyen, AES+F, and Juan Manuel Echevarría.

Among the 100+ independent spaces hosting exhibitions are the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, The Contemporary Arts Museum, The Menil Collection, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Houston Center for Photography and over 45 professional art galleries. Alternative artist-run spaces, corporations, retail locations, and restaurants become visual art spaces for the FotoFest Biennial. The Participating Spaces are integral to the FotoFest's effort to transform the city into a "museum without walls" connecting art to all parts of urban life.

FotoFest publishes a Biennial Catalogue and free citywide Exhibits and Events Map and Biennial Calendar.

NATURE PLAYS A ROLE: A FOTOFEST FILM SERIES

March 31 - April 15, 2006

FotoFest is sponsoring a special Film and Video series related to *The Earth* theme in partnership with the Environmental Film Festival in Washington D.C. and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Film Department. Flo Stone, artistic director and founder of the Washington, D.C. Environmental Film Festival, served as guest programmer for this expansive selection of acclaimed films. A number of the films bring diverse global environment concerns into sharp focus, while others inspire with stories of individuals confronting natural and man-made challenges.

The films are screening at The Brown Auditorium Theater at the Museum of Fine Arts.

Films being shown include a pre-release screening of *Genesis*, from the directors of *Microcosmos*, Claude Nuridsany and Marie Pérennou. Also on schedule is Akira Kurosawa's *Dersu Uzala*, Hayao Miyazaki's *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind*, and Thomas Riedelsheimer's *Rivers and Tides: Andy Goldsworthy Working With Time*.

A full listing of films is being posted on the website in February 2006.

BLACK RAIN – THE MICHELE BRANGWEN DANCE ENSEMBLE

March 24, 2006

The Michele Brangwen Dance Ensemble, in association with FotoFest, presents an evening of dance and music that celebrates the Festival's 2006 Biennial themes: *The Earth* and *Artists Responding to Violence*. The performance is Friday, March 24 at 8:00 p.m. at Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center.

The evening features a performance of *Black Rain*, a work by choreographer Michele Brangwen and composer Thomas Helton, that explores the dark poetry of rain by looking back to the fallout at two Ground Zeros - Hiroshima after the bomb, and the destruction of Lower Manhattan after the 9/11 attacks - with a cautionary look into the future under radioactive world leadership.

Black Rain is performed by the Michele Brangwen Dance Ensemble and the Rosta Jazz Avengers: John Edward Ross, guitar; Seth Paynter, saxophone; Richard Cholakian, percussion; and Thomas Helton, string bass.

The program also features the Joe LoCascio/Woody Witt Quartet performing new jazz compositions, including LoCascio's *Soul Song for a Paralyzed Civilization*, a haunting duet for piano and saxophone. Apria Records recording artist Woody Witt on saxophone, and Hart Music recording artist Joe LoCascio on piano, are joined by a rhythm section comprised of Houston's finest jazz musicians.

THE 2006 INTERNATIONAL MEETING PLACE March 10 – March 23, 2006

The largest event of its kind in the world, the *Meeting Place*, is known to photographers and professionals alike as a place where opportunities are created and careers can be made. FotoFest's Portfolio Review for artists, the *Meeting Place* brings artists together with influential photography professionals, museum curators, gallery owners, magazine editors, photo agencies, collectors and publishers for two-weeks of portfolio presentations and meetings.

Over 320 international photographers and 110 photo professionals are participating in the 2006 Meeting Place at The Doubletree Hotel, Downtown Houston, the headquarters hotel for FOTOFEST2006.

Along with the Meeting Place, FotoFest is sponsoring two one-day Workshops. On March 14, *Making the Digital World Work for You* features an in-depth overview from image capture to image output and how to control the image throughout the digital process. This workshop is moderated by Mary Virginia Swanson in conjunction with American Society of Media Photographers. *Publishing the Photographic Book* is taking place on March 19 and is moderated by Robert Morton with publishers, book packagers, agents and photography consultants. This workshop will cover the publishing process from contacting a publisher to distribution, as well as self publishing.

THE 2006 INTERNATIONAL FINE PRINT AUCTION March 14, 2006

The Fine Print Auction provides a rare opportunity for collectors to access high quality contemporary fine art photography from Latin America, Asia, Canada, Europe, and the United States. FotoFest's Seventh Fine Print Auction takes place at The Doubletree Hotel, Downtown Houston.

FotoFest sponsors the auction with support from Sotheby's New York and auctioneer Denise Bethel, Sotheby's Senior Vice President and Director of Photographs. Revenues from print sales at the Fine Print Auction benefit artist programs and the Meeting Place portfolio reviews allowing hundreds of photographic artists to exhibit work and show their portfolios to important museum curators, publishers, gallery owners, and representatives of photo agencies from the United States, Mexico, South America, Australia, Canada, and Europe.

Proceeds from Auction ticket and table sales benefit FotoFest's year-round educational program, Literacy Through Photography (LTP). LTP provides more than a thousand students in Houston-area public schools and beyond with cameras and a curriculum using photography to improve writing and cognitive skills.

For more information on the FOTOFEST2006 and its associated programs, please contact the FotoFest Press Coordinator at 713/ 223-5522 ext 26 or press3@fotofest.org. For updates on all FOTOFEST2006 programs see the FotoFest web site: www.fotofest.org.

Press images can be downloaded at <http://www.fotofest.org/pressimages>

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