Celebrating fifteen years
On February 14, 1993, the world’s first interfaith museum of contemporary art opened its doors. Fifteen years later, Saint Louis University’s Museum of Contemporary Religious Art (MOCRA) continues to serve as a forum for the ongoing dialogue between today’s artists and the major faith traditions. At this significant vantage point, MOCRA will present two fifteen-anniversary exhibitions that draw on artists and artworks selected from the museum’s first 35 exhibitions.

Works set in dialogue
Our first anniversary exhibition, Pursuit of the Spirit, sets works by over 40 artists in dialogue with each other, exploring broad themes such as Sacred Spaces, The Sublime, Mother and Child, and Image and Text. Artists in the exhibition include:

Alvin Ailey  Seyed Alavi  Romare Bearden  Lore Bert  Frederick J. Brown  María Magdalena Campos-Pons  Junko Chodos  Jon Cournoyer  Michael David  Lewis deSoto  Sue Eislер  Robert Farber  Oskar Fischinger  Arshile Gorky  Steven Heilmer  Steven Holl

Tony Hooker  Carolyn Jones  Tobi Kahn  Dean Kessman  Paul Kos  Robert Kostka  Frank LaPeña  Belinda Lee  Tim Liddy  Whitfield Lovell  Stephen Luccking  J. W. Mahoney  Bernard Maisner  Richard Meier  Jeff Miller

DoDo Jin Ming  Anne Minich  Jim Mophesis  Gary Passanise  Daniel Ramirez  James Rosen  Georges Rouault  Susan Schwab  Shahzia Sikander  Thomas Skomski  Kazuaki Tanahashi  Kanya Tjapangarti  Michael Tracy  Brian Tripp  Andy Warhol

Opening reception  Sunday, September 21, 2008  1 – 4 P.M.
Free public opening reception
2 P.M.  brief remarks
Terrence E. Dempsey, S.J.
Founding Director and Curator, MOCRA

Gerald D. Bolas, Ph.D.
former Director, Ackland Art Museum of the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill

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Museum of Contemporary Religious Art (MOCRA) • Saint Louis University
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Maps and parking directions are available on the MOCRA website. Sign up online for MOCRA’s e-newsletter to receive timely updates about MOCRA programming and events.

Pursuit of the Spirit
MOCRA presents the first of two exhibitions celebrating the museum’s first fifteen years. Drawing primarily on the MOCRA collection, Pursuit of the Spirit places works in dialogue in order to examine major themes that have emerged in MOCRA’s first 35 exhibitions.

Museum of Contemporary Religious Art • Saint Louis University

Pursuit of the Spirit

September 21 – December 14, 2008

In a time when religion is a predominant topic in societies throughout the world—often generating more heat than light—MOCRA continues to foster dialogue that seeks deeper understanding of others’ traditions and greater appreciation of one’s own.

For over 35 years, the Fusz Memorial Chapel was used by Jesuits studying philosophy at Saint Louis University, but in 1990 the Jesuits relocated to smaller residences near the campus. In Spring 1991 Saint Louis University President Rev. Lawrence Biondi, S.J., gave permission to Rev. Terrence Dempsey, S.J., to adapt the chapel for use as a museum devoted to the presentation of contemporary religious Art. A thoughtful renovation made the chapel a suitable and noteworthy space for displaying art while honoring the original purpose and architecture of the building.

Since then, the museum has mounted 35 exhibitions involving more than 160 artists. MOCRA’s exhibitions have demonstrated the range of contemporary religious and spiritual artistic expression, presenting the work of artists who have attained recognition regionally, nationally, and internationally. Some work overtly pays homage to particular faith traditions while other works are more oblique but nonetheless spiritual. The media employed have varied from traditional painting, drawing, and prints to unusual materials such as blood, earth, mylar, and helium.

Exhibitions at MOCRA have been enhanced by numerous conferences, lectures, and performances involving major theologians, visual artists, art historians, museum directors and curators, doctors, lawyers, philosophers, psychologists, choreographers, and musicians.

First column, from top: Romare Bearden, Mother and Child • Georges Rouault, Sometimes the blind have comforted those that see • Brian Tripp, Protection from Those Kinds of Things • Steven Heilmer, Nativity Stone (Mother’s Milk) • Tony Hooker, Rear Room with Window
Susan Schwalb, Sacred Land IV • Third column: Seyed Alavi, Noli me tangere • Fourth column: DoDo Jin Ming, Free Element XXXI • Whitfield Lovell, Heap • Carolyn Jones, Friends in Deed • Richard Meier, Jubilee Church

mocra.slu.edu 314.977.7170

turn page over for more information about the exhibition