

Pursuit of the Spirit

September 21 – December 14, 2008

opening reception

Sunday, September 21, 2008 1–4 P.M.

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.



María Magdalena Campos-Pons, *Cia Cara #1*, 2008. Large-format Polaroid. Collection of the Museum of Contemporary Religious Art.

MOCRA 15th anniversary exhibitions

Please join us as we celebrate the first fifteen years of MOCRA, a foundational legacy upon which we will build ever more expansive exhibitions and programming.

Fall 2008
Pursuit of the Spirit

Spring 2009
Good Friday

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 fifteenth-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:

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|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Alvin Ailey | Tony Hooker | DoDo Jin Ming |
| Seyed Alavi | Carolyn Jones | Anne Minich |
| Romare Bearden | Tobi Kahn | Jim Morphesis |
| Lore Bert | Dean Kessman | Gary Passanise |
| Frederick J. Brown | Paul Kos | Daniel Ramirez |
| María Magdalena Campos-Pons | Robert Kostka | James Rosen |
| Junko Chodos | Frank LaPeña | Georges Rouault |
| Jon Cournoyer | Belinda Lee | Susan Schwalb |
| Michael David | Tim Liddy | Shahzia Sikander |
| Lewis deSoto | Whitfield Lovell | Thomas Skomski |
| Sue Eisler | Stephen Luecking | Kazuaki Tanahashi |
| Robert Farber | J. W. Mahoney | Kanya Tjapangarti |
| Oskar Fischinger | Bernard Maisner | Michael Tracy |
| Arshile Gorky | Richard Meier | Brian Tripp |
| Steven Heilmer | Jeff Miller | Andy Warhol |
| Steven Holl | | |

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

This exhibition is made possible in part by financial support from the Regional Arts Commission



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.

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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.

Sample Images



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* Second column: 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*