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NEW MUSEUM'S INAUGURAL EXHIBITION "UNMONUMENTAL" EXPANDS TO INCLUDE COLLAGES BY ELEVEN ARTISTS

New York, NY... "Unmonumental," the three-floor inaugural exhibition at the new New Museum building, expands on January 16, 2008 with the opening of "Collage: The Unmonumental Picture." Recent collages by eleven artists, including large-scale works and new productions made expressly for the exhibition, will be installed on the gallery walls surrounding the sculptures already on view in "Unmonumental: The Object in the 21st Century." The works brought together in "Collage: The Unmonumental Picture" will transform "Unmonumental," an exhibition in four parts, into a giant assemblage itself. "Unmonumental" is an exhibition about fragmented forms, torn pictures and clashing sounds. Investigating the nature of collage in contemporary art practices, the exhibition also describes the present as an age of crumbling symbols and broken icons. Inspired by the art it presents, "Unmonumental" will continue to grow and change like a collage with new layers of sound and Internet-based art, to be added on February 13 ("The Sound of Things: Unmonumental Audio") and February 15 ("Montage: Unmonumental Online").

"Unmonumental" is sponsored by BNP Paribas and is on view through March 30, 2008.

The multigenerational group of artists in "Collage: The Unmonumental Picture" includes Mark Bradford, (b. 1961, lives in Los Angeles); Jonathan Hernández (b. 1972, lives in Mexico); Thomas Hirschhorn (b. 1957, lives in Paris); Christian Holstad (b. 1972, lives in New York); Kim Jones (b. 1944, lives in New York); Wangechi Mutu (b. 1972, lives in New York); Henrik Olesen (b. 1967, lives in Berlin); Martha Rosler (b. 1943, lives in New York); Nancy Spero (b. 1926, lives in New York), John Stezaker (b. 1947, lives in London), and Kelley Walker (b. 1969, lives in New York).

Although they use varied strategies and materials, each of the artists in this portion of "Unmonumental" exploits the formal and ideological power of juxtaposing found images to

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create works that range from social and political commentaries to Surrealist fantasies and personal confessions.

Collage is a medium that by definition incorporates fragments and deals with opposing tensions, broken images, hidden desires, and collective myths. It was born out of the social unrest of the first decades of the 20th century and flourished during times of crisis such as the First World War and the years that followed. Historically the reappearance of collage has dovetailed with times of trauma, violence and social change. There is a sense of urgency in all of the collages in "The Unmonumental Picture" and some specifically address current conflicts throughout the world. Martha Rosler and Thomas Hirschhorn's works consider the subject of the wars in the Middle East. Jonathan Hernández, Kim Jones, a veteran of the Vietnam War, and Nancy Spero, an anti-war activist for the past sixty years, use more general images of violence and protest. Wangechi Mutu's segmented compositions evoke ominous landscapes and battlefields. In her mural, which will be created onsite, a lowering night sky will emerge from a disparate trove of images.

Henrik Olesen's and John Stezaker's collages attempt to retreat in to a more obscure, but no less disturbing psychological space. Drawing from Surrealism, both artists transform the familiar in to the enduringly strange through cut-and-paste juxtapositions. Christian Holstad's series of colorful collages create their own spaces as well, but rather than conjuring a world of the subconscious, they depict a rollicking world of flamboyant gay sexuality in domestic settings ranging from avocado kitchens to paisley family rooms.

Among many of today's artists, collage is part of a larger impulse towards image appropriation that comes directly out of digital culture. Kelley Walker recycles existing images like advertisements and promotional posters, juxtaposing them with images of commercial objects, cultural icons, and his own drawings. Mark Bradford's billboard-scaled collage works are composed of layers of old posters peeled from the walls of his neighborhood in South Central Los Angeles. On first glance, they resemble topical maps, but on closer examination, bits of pictures and words emerge to create an intricate texture that is both a visual portrait of the area and an absolutely imaginary landscape.

"Collage: The Unmonumental Picture" is organized by the New Museum curatorial team of Richard Flood, Massimiliano Gioni, and Laura Hoptman. A 144-page catalogue co-published by the New Museum with Merrill Publishers/Mondadori Electa accompanies "Collage: The Unmonumental Picture." Essays by Flood, Gioni, and Hoptman, as well as interviews with and writings by the eleven artists in the exhibition, are included.

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EXHIBITION-RELATED PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

Saturday, January 19, 3 p.m. Chief Curator Richard Flood leads a discussion with Mark Bradford, Christian Holstad, and Wangechi Mutu. Free with Museum admission. For more information or for a complete listing of the New Museum's public programming for January please visit newmuseum.org.

LEAD EXHIBITION SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT

"Unmonumental" is sponsored by BNP Paribas. Additional generous funding has been provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, the Toby Devan Lewis Emerging Artists Exhibitions Fund, and the J. McSweeney and G. Mills Publications Fund.

ABOUT THE NEW MUSEUM

Founded in 1977, the New Museum is the first and only contemporary art museum in New York City and among the most respected internationally, with a curatorial program unrivaled in the United States in its global scope and adventurousness. With the inauguration of our new, state-of-the-art building on the Bowery, the New Museum is the destination for new art and new ideas.

LOCATION, HOURS, AND ADMISSION

The New Museum is located at 235 Bowery (at Prince Street between Stanton and Rivington Streets, one and a half blocks south of Houston)

The Museum is open to the public Wednesday through Sunday, from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. with extended evening hours on Thursday and Friday from 6-10 p.m. CIT is the lead sponsor of CIT Free Thursday Evenings (from 7-10 p.m). The Museum is closed to the public on Monday and Tuesday, except for prescheduled group tours on Tuesday.

General Admission: \$12
Seniors: \$8
Students: \$6
18 and under: free
Members: free

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Note: Press are invited to preview "Collage: The Unmonumental Picture" on Wednesday, January 16, 2008 from 10:30 a.m. to noon. RSVP by email to press@newmuseum.org.