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MUSEUM

ALTOIDS®

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NEW MUSEUM ANNOUNCES FIRST WINNERS OF THE ALTOIDS® AWARD

Four \$25,000 Prizes for American Emerging Artists Nominated and Selected Exclusively by Artists

New York, NY... The **New Museum** and **Altoids, the Curiously Strong Mints®**, today announced the first winners of **The Altoids Award**. **Ei Arakawa** of New York City; **Michael Patterson-Carver** of Portland, Oregon; **Lauren Kelley** of Houston, Texas; and **Michael Stickrod** of New Haven, Connecticut were selected among forty-six nominees by a jury composed of **Paul McCarthy**, **Cindy Sherman**, and **Rirkrit Tiravanija**. A truly unique exploration of American emerging art, the prize is awarded biennially by the New Museum and Altoids to four artists nominated and selected by a panel comprised entirely of other artists. Award recipients in 2008 are each given a \$25,000 cash prize—totaling \$100,000—as well as a joint exhibition organized by Massimiliano Gioni, Director of Special Exhibitions at the New Museum, on view from June 25 through October 12, 2008, offering these artists their earliest exposure to a broad, international museum audience.

Working in different media, spanning performance to video and drawing, the four winners offer a vivid picture of today's American art and a complex, view of America itself. The artists also seem to be interested in new forms of storytelling, and in their individual styles they all explore the ways people come together to form groups based on identity, collaboration, family ties, or politics.

"Altoids has long been a key advocate of contemporary artists and a supporter of the New Museum. The Altoids Award is a significant way for Altoids and the Museum to expand their recognition of new American talent. For so many of these artists, this is a life-changing opportunity, and that is exactly what we are here for—to champion emerging artists and to consistently offer our audiences the chance to experience new art and new ideas from a variety of perspectives," said Lisa Phillips, *Toby Devan Lewis Director*, New Museum.

The Altoids Award is based on a unique selection process that calls for a geographically and stylistically diverse group of ten artists to each nominate up to five emerging artists they have identified as producing especially innovative, unusual, and powerful work. The nominators themselves are selected for their proven commitment to publicly supporting the artistic community through writing, teaching, organizing exhibitions, running alternative spaces, or simply promoting their colleagues. The nominators for the first Altoids Award were Edgar Arceneaux (Los Angeles); Allora and Calzadilla (San Juan, Puerto Rico); Mitch Cope (Detroit); Trisha Donnelly (San Francisco); Harrell Fletcher (Portland, Oregon); Michelle

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Grabner (Chicago); Jay Heikes (Minneapolis); Matt Keegan (New York); Rick Lowe (Houston); and Frances Stark (Los Angeles). The award recipients were chosen from the nominated pool of artists by three established artists known for their groundbreaking work and for their unflagging commitment to engaging and supporting new talent. Jurors Paul McCarthy, Cindy Sherman, and Rirkrit Tiravanija selected the four 2008 Altoids Award winners from a pool of forty-six nominees.

ABOUT ALTOIDS

Altoids has worked to advance the careers of emerging artists since 1998. In addition to its ongoing support for numerous contemporary art organizations and exhibitions, the Altoids Curiously Strong Collection supports today's emerging artistic talent by providing meaningful exposure and recognition in a public art forum. In 2000, Altoids donated its entire Curiously Strong Collection, as well as all subsequent works, to the New Museum, adding significantly to the Museum's holdings and marking its first-ever acceptance of a corporate collection. During the past seven years, Altoids has donated more than 155 extraordinary works that represent an innovative and adventurous approach to visual arts and patronage to the New Museum's permanent collection. Through The Altoids Award, the New Museum and Altoids will continue to nurture their long-standing partnership and commitment to undiscovered artists.

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.

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ABOUT THE FIRST WINNERS OF THE ALTOIDS® AWARD

Ei Arakawa works with numerous participants, combining dance, improvised actions, and objects to create a new genre of performance that he calls "Market." The product of Arakawa's "Market" is not quite an artwork and not quite a sculpture, but is constantly shifting between the two. Arakawa was born in Iwaka, Japan in 1977, and currently lives and works in New York City. He earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the School of Visual Arts, New York, in 2004, and a master of fine arts degree in film and video from Bard College, New York, in 2006. From 2005 to 2006, he participated in the Studio Program at the Whitney Museum of American Arts, New York. Arakawa has exhibited, performed, and screened his work internationally, most recently at Performa07; at the Royal College of Art in London; and the Japan Society Gallery in New York, among others. Ei Arakawa was nominated by Matt Keegan.

After his exposure to civil rights protesting as a child, **Michael Patterson-Carver** has been committed to create works that engage in a personal form of political activism. Slightly naïve, always strangely obsessive, Patterson-Carver's color drawings of picketing and political protests paint a small history of dissent that is simultaneously comical, ironic, and profoundly human. Most recently the artist has started a series of drawings that read like allegories of destruction or chronicles of complex conspiracy theories often starring George W. Bush and Osama bin Laden. Born in Chicago, Illinois in 1958, Patterson-Carver lives and works in Portland, Oregon, where he first started presenting his works on the streets. Developed completely outside the traditional system of contemporary art, Patterson-Carver's work has only recently been shown in galleries and institutions, appearing at small A projects, Portland; White Columns, New York; and at the ICA, London. Michael Patterson-Carver was nominated by Harrell Fletcher.

Lauren Kelley uses stop-motion animation to explore stereotypes of femininity and race. By using her voice to speak for a cast of black dolls, Kelley breathes life into plastic characters while poignantly and humorously addressing issues such as gender, womanhood, and the human condition. Whether telling stories of unplanned pregnancy or exploring the world of flight attendants, Kelley's work introduces its viewers to a world in which dolls and puppets are caught in endless streams of consciousness and are trapped in a bizarre theater of the absurd. Kelley was born in 1972 in Baltimore, Maryland, and currently lives and works in Houston, Texas. She earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Maryland Institute College of Art, and a master of fine arts degree from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work has been shown at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, and The Dallas Contemporary, among others. In 2007, she had residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and the Glassel School of Art. Kelley's work is in the collection of the African American Museum, Dallas, Texas. Kelley has also experimented with new ways to distribute her work, broadcasting her videos through Houston's public access television to affectively reach an audience far beyond the art world. Lauren Kelley was nominated by Rick Lowe.

Inspired by the Free Cinema movement, **Michael Stickrod** creates films that compose an ever-expanding family album. Stickrod layers footage of his relatives with homemade soundtracks, found audio, and photographed and scanned objects to make videos that paint an unsettling portrait of middle America. At times candid and sincere, other times manipulative and voyeuristic, Stickrod's films are suspended somewhere between confessional home videos and anthropological field research. Stickrod was born in 1978 in Columbus, Ohio, and currently lives and works in New Haven, Connecticut. He earned a bachelor of fine arts from Ohio State University in 2003, and a master of fine arts degree in 2005 from Yale University. Stickrod has participated in several group exhibitions in the U.S., most recently at Newman Popiashvili, New York, and the Center for Contemporary Art in New Haven. In 2007, he received the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism Grant. Michael Stickrod was nominated by Jay Heikes.