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FotoFest 2010 Biennial **Contemporary U.S. Photography**

March 12 – April 25, 2010

Houston, Texas

HOUSTON, TEXAS - AUGUST 15, 2009 - Wendy Watriss and Fred Baldwin, Founding Directors of FotoFest, announced today the theme, dates and curators for the upcoming and thirteenth **FotoFest Biennial**, the longest running and most acclaimed photography biennial in the United States. Five curators are invited to put together the exhibition program, which focuses on **Contemporary U.S. Photography**. The upcoming Biennial takes place **March 12 through April 25, 2010 in Houston, Texas**. The FotoFest 2010 Biennial will also see the return of its most popular programs: the Meeting Place Portfolio Review, the FotoFest Fine Print Auction, the FotoFest Workshops, as well as exhibitions, forums, talks, film and video programs that will encompass the whole city of Houston for a month and a half.

“We think it is the right time to explore the fascinating trends that have emerged in the practice of photography in the U.S. We expect the works will also reflect the formidable changes and challenges that are engulfing our country,” said Fred Baldwin, FotoFest Chairman and Co-founder. “We believe that the vision of the five curators who will develop the exhibitions will contribute immensely to this presentation, and we are very much looking forward to collaborating with them. They are all U.S.-born or based, and represent, or have worked with, major U.S. and international museums.”

The five curators who will put together the principal exhibitions of contemporary U.S. photography for the FotoFest 2010 Biennial are **CHARLOTTE COTTON**, Senior Curator of Photography for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and Associate Curator **EDWARD ROBINSON; NATASHA EGAN**, Associate Director and Curator, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College, Chicago; **GILBERT VICARIO**, Curator of the Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, Iowa and former Assistant Curator of Latin American Art and Latino Art, Museum of Fine Arts Houston; **AARON SCHUMAN**, editor and co-founder of *Seesaw*, an avant-garde online journal of photography, and an independent curator and critic with a strong commitment to U.S. photography. Together, they represent some of the leading voices in contemporary photographic art today and they will bring a cross-cultural perspective to the Biennial.

“This is an exciting process. We expect to see work across the full gamut of art practice,” says Wendy Watriss, FotoFest Artistic Director and Co-founder. “We have invited these curators because of their knowledge and innovative way of looking at art and photography. They think seriously about the relationship between meaning and visual content, which will be illustrated in the FotoFest 2010 Biennial Exhibitions as well as in our Biennial catalogue and series of forums on curating.”

In addition to the exhibitions produced by FotoFest, The FotoFest 2010 Biennial features hundreds of exhibitions at participating spaces across the city of Houston. These spaces include every major museum and non-profit art space, most commercial galleries, corporate office spaces and dozens of retail and restaurant spaces. A full program of the FotoFest 2010 Biennial exhibitions and all the peripheral exhibitions and programs taking place during the month and a half-long, citywide event will be released later in the year.

One of the most successful and ground-breaking programs of the FotoFest Biennial is the **Meeting Place Portfolio Review, March 12 – April 1, 2010**. The Meeting Place is the largest, most international program of its kind in the world and presents an unparalleled opportunity for photographic artists to present their work to some of the most important professionals in the field from around the world — museum curators, gallery owners, magazine editors, representatives of photography agencies, collectors and publishers.

During the course of the 16-day event, over 150 professionals from the U.S. and 20 other countries will review the work of 500 artists. The event has become a launching pad for many careers. The FotoFest Biennial originated the modern portfolio review and established a format that has been copied and replicated across the world, from China to Brazil, and from Portland, Oregon to Madrid, Spain.

The Meeting Place offers four sessions of four day reviews and photographers are guaranteed a minimum of four formal appointments per day in addition to informal reviews. Portfolios need not relate to the general Biennial theme. The Initial Registration period for the 2010 Meeting Place was June 1 – July 13, 2009, but **registrations are still being accepted as cancellations will take place. Information is available at www.fotofest.org/biennial2010/meetingplace**. A list of reviewers invited to the 2010 Meeting Place is posted at www.fotofest.org/biennial2010/meetingplace/reviewers.htm and is updated regularly.

Information on Biennial **Workshops, Seminars and Symposia**, organized by FotoFest, is available at **www.fotofest.org/biennial2010/seminars.htm**. FotoFest 2010 Workshops offer an in-depth experience with online media tools and multi-media programming, applicable to art and editorial work exploring sound, video, animation, hyperlinks and inter-connection to social media networks. **Curatorial Dialogues** and **Symposia** will provide an inside look and critique of curating in the contemporary art world.

For more information on FotoFest or the FotoFest 2010 Biennial, please visit www.fotofest.org.

Media Contact: For Further information, interview and visuals, please contact:

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SPONSORS

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ABOUT FOTOFEST

Founded in 1983 and based in Houston, Texas, FotoFest is a non-profit organization promoting photographic arts and education. FotoFest is recognized for its discovery and presentation of important talent, contemporary and historical, from around the world, its commitment to presenting important social ideas through the photographic arts, its groundbreaking exhibitions and its portfolio review program, The International Meeting Place. FotoFest has curated and commissioned exhibitions of photo-based art from Latin America, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. In addition to year-round art exhibitions and programming, FotoFest's school-based education program, Literacy Through Photography, uses photography to stimulate visual literacy, writing and analytical thinking.

The FotoFest Biennial is the first international Biennial of Photography and Photo-related Art in the United States. Through the FotoFest Biennial and its year-round art programs, FotoFest is known as a platform for art and ideas, combining museum-quality art with important social and aesthetic issues. FotoFest curated exhibitions give priority to the works of important but little-known photographic artists from the U.S. and around the world.