



**Frost Art
Museum**

For Immediate Release

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ART MEETS WORLD

FIU's New Frost Art Museum Opens November 29

Frost Opens With Six New Exhibitions and Celebrations

Debut of Miami's Only Free Museum Primes City for Art Basel Miami Beach

Miami, (Nov. 18, 2008) The new Frost Art Museum at Florida International University opens Saturday, Nov. 29, when Miami will have a chance to view this spectacular architectural backdrop, and its main attraction -- six new exhibitions including "Modern Masters from the Smithsonian American Art Museum". The opening also kicks off more than a week of events celebrating the debut of Miami's first new art museum in a decade and the only major Miami museum that charges no admission. Opening events will culminate with the Frost's Art Basel sponsored event, the sixth annual Breakfast in the Park, featuring sculptor Joel Shapiro.

"Nov. 29th will be an important day in the life of this community," said Carol Damian, director and chief curator of the Frost. "We now have a world class museum in this city that offers important exhibitions and art education free to the public. We're saying to our community, 'this is your museum'."

From Nov. 29 through Sunday, Dec. 7, the museum will be open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to celebrate the opening. Events include opening day, a special member and donor event, faculty and student days and Breakfast in the Park, Sunday, Dec. 7. This annual event, which takes place from 9:30 a.m. to noon, draws hundreds of visitors each year during Art Basel, Miami Beach. It features a continental breakfast, tours of the Sculpture Park at FIU as well as the museum and an informal talk by an acclaimed sculptor. (For more information, please visit frostartmuseum.org.)

"During the Thanksgiving holiday weekend as people look for engaging activities, we encourage them to visit the Frost and see these wonderful exhibitions," Damian said.

A Work of Art

The 46,000-square-foot building is itself a work of art designed by Yann Weymouth, design director of Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum (hok). The new Frost Art Museum cost \$16 million to build and includes nine galleries and 10,000 square feet of breath-taking gallery spaces. Design began in 2001, and two years later, Skanska USA, the construction firm, broke ground as the museum was officially renamed The Patricia & Phillip Frost Art Museum. Construction began in 2004. The building was completed in 2007. Some 6,580 pieces of stone and 42,390 square feet of granite from China were used to construct the building.

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New Frost Art Museum – Page Two

Its design features make the Frost a unique venue for experiencing the visual arts in Florida. No art museums in the state have attempted to exhibit paintings in natural light, although many works were created in and meant to be seen in daylight. Former Frost Director Dahlia Morgan and Patricia Frost (for whom the building was named) were adamant that the light diffusion system be included, with dramatic results. Five of the building's nine galleries feature natural light. Frost worked closely with Weymouth on almost every aspect of the design from lighting to its floating stairway to the sparkling Chinese granite façade.

New Exhibitions Take Center Stage

Opening day will feature six new exhibitions, a first for the Frost, which opened in 1977 as a 2,800 square foot gallery. Known as The Art Museum at FIU, the museum, founded by visual arts professor and painter Jim Couper, became a dynamic cultural institution. The old gallery closed in May 2008.

Modern Masters from the Smithsonian (through March 1, 2009)

The Frost will be the first stop on a national tour for the show. Featuring 31 of the most celebrated artists who came to maturity in the 1950s, the exhibition traces this epochal period through 43 key paintings and sculpture selected from the Museum's collection. Five of the pieces were donated to the Smithsonian American Art Museum from the private collection of Patricia and Phillip Frost. The exhibition includes such artists as Franz Kline, Michael Goldberg, Josef Alvers, Louise Nevelson, Romare Bearden, Larry Rivers and Jim Dine.

Figurative Art Past and Present: Selections from the Private Collection (through 2010)

This inaugural exhibition will focus on the diverse representations of the figure as a vision of humanity, whether earthly or divine, by placing it within an art historical context. This exhibition will include contemporary works, ritual artifacts of Pre-Columbian cultures, traditional African wood carvings and delicate visages of Asian deities.

Simulacra and Essence: The Paintings of Luisa Basnuevo (through April 4, 2009)

Basnuevo's solo exhibition presents recent works from her series of paintings inspired by eucalyptus seeds she collected in Spain. From these seeds, she creates a world that challenges the concept of reality. Basnuevo works within an abstract genre using gestures, mask-making, over-painting, transparent washes and tonal variations to construct her imagery. Basnuevo's show is particularly special for the Frost and FIU. She is a graduate of FIU's Bachelor of Fine Arts program and of Yale university. The curator of her show is artist and painting professor Jim Couper, who is also the founder of the Frost Art Museum. Her work is the first to hang in the museum.

Intersections – Florencio Gelabert (through Feb. 28, 2009)

New York based artist Florencio Gelabert's environmentally based installations are site specific, three-dimensional works that address issues of humankind's relationship with the natural world and our role in the depletion of natural resources. The work combines sophisticated technologies with basic materials such as wood, glass and metal, to create complex three-dimensional works that address the perils facing the environment.

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New Frost Art Museum Opens – page three

***Drawing in Space: The Peninsula Project Illustrated* – John Henry (through March 9, 2009)**

This exhibition will highlight and illustrate the process and concept behind *Drawing in Space: The Peninsula Project*, which incorporates large-scale sculpture into the Florida landscape. Henry specifically chose Florida for its peninsular shape which creates a unique geographic environment. The Frost will present the signature exhibition for the project *Peninsula Project Illustrated*, and will showcase all nine monumental works in the seven participating Florida cities. With models of the sculpture and large photographs of the pieces set in their various landscapes – the exhibition will be a tribute to the artist's unprecedented use of the Florida peninsula as his canvas.

***Full Circle* – Andrew Reach (through April 4, 2009)**

Andrew Reach was working as an architect on the Frost Art Museum when his career ended because of a crippling spinal disease. In an effort to transcend his pain and physical limitations, he turned his creative energies to art. Lacking the strength to paint, Reach created large-format computer-generated images. His love for painters Larry Rivers and Jackson Pollock inspired him to fuse the abstract expressionist's aesthetic with his interest in Eastern traditions, Islamic art and African patterns. Reach comes full circle with an exhibition of his work at The Frost: the beautiful and innovative structure he helped design.

Modern Masters from the Smithsonian is sponsored in part by Funding Arts Network, the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

About the Frost Art Museum – Florida International University

The Frost is an AAM accredited museum and Smithsonian affiliate. The museum is located at 10975 SW 17th St. across from the Blue garage and adjacent to the Wertheim Performing Arts Center on the University Park campus. Its hours of operation are Tuesday through Saturday 10- 5.and Sunday noon-5. The Frost is closed on all legal holidays. For more information, please visit www.frostartmuseum.org or call 305-348-2890.

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