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MoCP

Museum of
Contemporary Photography

COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO
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**THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND
February 1 - March 22, 2008**

Roberto Bellini
Peter Granser
Caroline Hake
Christian Jankowski
Simon Roberts
Greg Stimac
Bryan Zanisnik

Chicago-- In February 2008, the MoCP will open a group exhibition of work by seven artists—two of whom are American, and five of whom are not—offering diverse perceptions of the United States. Their artwork touches upon some of the most current American concerns as well as some of its most enduring stereotypes. They use current events, personal observations, and often humor to comment on the political, religious, and cultural climate of this country. In their work they demonstrate that our nation's character is not tribal, but rather it is a constantly shifting confluence of traditions, stereotypes, and opinions, as understood from both within the country and from the outside.

MoCP curator Karen Irvine titled the show after Woody Guthrie's 1940 song, written in response to what he felt was the overzealous glorification of the country in the lyrics of Irving Berlin's song "God Bless America," widely released in 1938. Guthrie was reacting to what he believed was a disconnect between the exalted adoration of the country in Berlin's song and the reality of social problems such as the extremely unbalanced distribution of wealth that existed at the end of the Great Depression. 67 years later, "This Land is Your Land" has become one of the most popular patriotic songs of all time. But what seems to be patriotic, even positive, on the surface is not always what it seems, and the works in this exhibition reflect the polarizing issues our nation faces today: the complicated and messy War on Terror, as well as battles over immigration, security, abortion, and economics. Yet, says Irvine, "perhaps these fissures are indicators of patriotism in its higher form – the questioning of one's country in a desire to make it better."

For more about this exhibition and the artists' work, please visit <http://mocp.org/exhibitions>.

High resolution photos are available.

MoCP SPONSORS

The exhibitions, presentations, and related programs of the MoCP are sponsored in part by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; The Mayer and Morris Kaplan Family Foundation; the Lloyd A. Fry Foundation; The National Endowment for the Arts; the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs/After School Matters; American Airlines, the official airlines of the MoCP, and our members.

ABOUT MOCP

The Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP), a resident organization of Columbia College Chicago, is the only museum in the Midwest with an exclusive commitment to the medium of photography. By presenting projects and exhibitions that embrace a wide range of contemporary aesthetics and technologies, the Museum strives to communicate the value and significance of photographic images as expressions of human thought, imagination, and creativity.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Karen Irvine is the curator of the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Columbia College Chicago. She has organized numerous exhibitions including: Audible Imagery: Sound and Photography; Anthony Goicolea; Tracey Baran; Scott Fortino; Shirana Shahbazi: Goftare Nik/Good Words; Jason Salavon; Jin Lee; Paul Shambroom: Evidence of Democracy; Alec Soth: Sleeping by the Mississippi; The Furtive Gaze; and Camera/Action: Performance and Photography, among others. She is a part-time instructor of photography at Columbia College Chicago. She received her MFA in photography from FAMU, Prague.

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IMAGE:

Greg Stimac
Peeling Out, 2007
Dvd
Courtesy of the artist